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ENGLISH WRITERS

ENGLISH WRITERS

AN ATTEMPT TOWARDS

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

BY

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FROM CÆDMON TO THE CONQUEST

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ENGLISH WRITERS.

BOOK II.

From Cædmon to the Conquest.

CHAPTER I.

WIDSITH.

WIDSITH—Farway—whose name signifies his travel into distant lands— *Widsith.*

> "Widsith unlocked his word-hoard ; and then spake
> He among men whose travel over earth
> Was farthest through the tribes and through the folks :
> Treasure to be remembered came to him
> Often in hall.
> Among the Myrgings, nobles gave him birth.
> In his first journey he, with Ealhhild,
> The pure peacemaker, sought the fierce king's home,
> Eastward of Ongle, home of Eormanric,
> The wrathful treaty-breaker."

What poet was he whose song has this beginning? When did he live, and whither did he wander? Was he one person, or were there gathered under his name fragments of travel-song that are not all from one man or one time?

The poem has come down to us in a single transcript. It is in a collection of English poems given to his cathedral

by Leofric, Bishop of Exeter between the years 1046 and 1073. The volume is still in the cathedral, and is known as the "Codex Exoniensis," or Exeter Book. In some part at least, "Widsith," known also as "The Scóp" or "The Traveller's Song," is no doubt one of the oldest poems in First-English.

Source of the Poem.

Widsith is said to have been born among the Myrgings, and to have gone to the court of Eormanric—which was east of the land of the Angles—as poet in the train of a peace-making Queen Ealhhild. The Myrgings were the Maurjungi of the ancient Maurungania—they were Nordalbingians, who dwelt north of the Elbe; and Eormanric was Hermanaric or Ermeric. This was the great warrior-king of the Goths who, in the fourth century, subdued surrounding peoples, but left to them their laws and rulers on condition that they paid him homage. Thus Eormanric became the head of a confederation which Jornandes, in his "History of the Goths," believes to have included all the tribes of Germany and Scythia. In extreme old age, Eormanric found his dominions wasted by the Huns. His strength was enfeebled not by age only, but also by a wound in his side, given by two brothers who avenged a sister's cruel death; and depression of mind caused him to kill himself about the year 376, some five years before the death of Ulfilas. At that time the Ongle could only have been the Angle of the continent, before the settlements that gave to our own land its name, of which the first is commonly ascribed to the year 449. Jornandes* includes "Merens" among the tribes subdued by Hermanaric. These may be the Myrgings. Their land north of the Elbe had for its eastern boundary the land of the Angles, through which Ealhhild would pass to the

Widsith's Travels.

* Jornandes of Ravenna was of Gothic race, and served as secretary to the Gothic kings of Italy under the empire of Justinian. His book, "De Rebus Geticis," was written about the year 552.

court of Eormanric. Ealhhild is described later in the poem as the wife of Eádgils, King of the Myrgings, and the daughter of Eádwin.

We proceed now to the unlocking of Widsith's word-hoard—

> "Of many things then he began to speak:
> Much have I asked and learnt of men in rule
> Over the peoples;—every chief must live
> Following others in his country's rule,
> By custom, who would thrive upon his throne.
> Of such was Hwala, once most prosperous;
> And Alexander, wealthiest of all
> The race of man, and he throve most of those
> Whom I have heard of, asking through the world."

The death of Alexander the Great was about seven centuries before that of Hermanaric, who was called by the Goths the Alexander of his time. Alexander is here quoted only as familiar pattern of a thriving chief. The pattern chief whose name stands before his should be, and possibly is, Cyrus, who ruled two centuries earlier, though the name has suffered phonetic and other change.* The poem then goes on to give a list of the great chiefs who ruled over tribes and peoples of the north of Europe:—

> "Attila ruled the Huns; Hermanaric
> The Goths; over the Banings Becca ruled;
> Over the Burgends Gifica. The Greeks
> Were under Cæsar; Cælic ruled the Fins;
> Hagena the Island tribes, and Henden Gloms;
> Witta ruled Swæfs; the Hælsings Wada ruled,
> Meaca the Myrgings; the Hundings, Mearcolf.

* The old *h* sounded almost as *c*; thus Jornandes Latinised Hnæf into Cniva. Hwala sounded as Cwala. Then also there is close proximity of sound between cerebral *l* and cerebral *r*. Storm writes that "these sounds which naturally follow one another melt in the hearing into one mixed sound which upon us [Norwegians] has more the effect of *l*, upon others more of *r*." (Quoted by Sievers, "Grundzüge der Phonetik.") Thus *l* may have replaced *r* in the name which we write Cyrus.

Theodric ruled the Franks; the Rondings Thyle,
Breoca the Brondings. Billing ruled the Werns;
Oswine the Eowas; over the Jutes Gefwulf;
Fin son of Folcwald ruled the Frisian race;
Sigehere ruled longest over the Sea Danes;
Hnæf ruled the Hocings; Helm the Wulfings; Wald
The Woings; Wód the Thyrings; and Sæferth
The Sycgs, and Ongetheow the Swedes; Sceafthere
The Ymbers; Sceafa the Longbards; and Han
The Hætwers; Holen ruled over the Wrosns.
Hringwald the Herefaras' king was named.
Offa ruled Ongle; Alewih the Danes;
Of all these men he was the proudest, yet
He over Offa won no mastery,
But earliest among men, while yet a child,
The greatest of the kingdoms Offa won."

There is a rough order in the naming of the tribes whose chiefs are recorded in this passage; they are named generally from the east westward towards the North Sea. The first chief named is Attila, King of the Huns, whose ravages were finally checked in the year 451 by the battle of Châlons-sur-Marne, in which Theodoric, King of the Goths, fought on the side of the Romans and received his death-wound. Attila died two years after.

The list includes Theodoric, King of the (Austrasian) Franks, upon whose shore Hygelac made his descent in the year 520;* Sæferth, who ruled the Sycgs, called in the Fight at Finnesburg Sigeferth Lord of the Secgs;† Fin Folcwalda;‡ and Fin's brother-in-law, Hnæf, the son of Hoca, who is said to have ruled over the Hocings. But Theodoric I. did not become king until the death of his father, Hlodowig (Clovis) in 511. This list of rulers, therefore, may have been written in the earlier half of the sixth century; but it could not have been written in the fifth. If we take the poem literally, and suppose Widsith to have been a youth

* "E. W." I. 336. † "E. W." I. 350. ‡ "E. W." I. 352.

of sixteen when he began his travel by going to the court of Hermanaric with Queen Ealhhild, and if we suppose also that his going was in the last year of Hermanaric's life, his years, if he lived, would have reached one hundred and fifty at the date of Theodoric's becoming King over the Austrasian Franks. Therefore if Widsith made a poem that described his own visit to the court of Eormanric, this list of chiefs was added at least eighty years later.

Gifica who ruled the Burgundians was Gibica, the Old German Gibich, the Scandinavian Giuki whose name often occurs in the Elder Edda. He was a mythical hero, whose name, expressing the chief's attribute of a giver, Jacob Grimm held to have been one of the names of Odin. Hagena who ruled the Island tribes is the Hogne of Scandinavian tradition, and of the legend of Gudrun. Henden, King of the Gloms, who is named with Hagena, may be the Hedin who carried away Hogne's daughter Hilde, and whom Hogne sought first on the coast of Norway, then sought among the Orkneys, and found before Hoy, the high island which ends on the western side with a precipice a thousand feet high. The stolen daughter brought to her father offers of peace, which he refused because, he said, his sword Dainsleif was drawn, and never went back into its sheath till it had killed a man. Then came a great fight that lasted all day long; and in the night Hilde by magic power wakened all the dead to fight again upon the morrow. So, said the old songs, they still fight daily, fall on the field of battle, and at night all their weapons and shields are transformed to stone. But in the morning men and arms are serviceable as ever; and so it will be until doomsday.

The elder Offa, next referred to, might have had a place in Widsith's original song, for he is supposed to have lived in the middle of the fourth century. Of him and of his

fight at Fifeldor we have already heard.* Ongetheow also we have met with.† Alewih, ruler of the Danes, was an Olaus or Olave; probably the Olaus who succeeded Ingild. An old chronicle‡ says of him that he subdued all surrounding regions, and even carried victory beyond the Danube. Thus in Widsith's recital of the names of chiefs lie facts that have become clouded with fable; and sometimes, perhaps, names may occur that from the first were mythical; sometimes, also, a name may have been invented to secure the proper sequence of alliteration.

Among tribes named are the Hælsings, who have left their name in Helsingborg and Elsinore. The Ymbers may be the Imbers of the Island of Femern. The Eowas may have been of the Swedish island of Oeland. The Hundings were perhaps in Jutland, where there are now Hundborg and Hundsland. The Swæfs were of North Sweven, on the Elbe; the Werns, also upon the Elbe, were the Varini. The Thyrings were Thuringians who touched, probably, the south bank of the Elbe. The Wulfings were Goths who are supposed to be of the tribe of Hildebrand who fought with Hadubrand,§ and who bore wolves on his shield. The Longbards were the Lombards, still on the banks of the Elbe, a people that did not enter Italy with Alboin until the year 568; and the Hætwers were the Hetware of Beowulf.‖ They were neighbours to the West Frieslanders upon the Frankish coast, and were among those who opposed Hygelac when that lord and kinsman of Beowulf fought his last battle, and was slain and buried near the Rhine mouth.

In all these names of places and of people we see dimly through a mist movement of tribes in the north of Europe in the latter half of the fifth century and the begin-

* "E. W." I. 337, 338. † "E. W." I. 300, 306.
‡ Sven Aggonis, in "Scriptores Rerum Danicarum."
§ "E. W." I. 258–261. ‖ "E. W." I. 318, 333–335.

ning of the sixth, and we hear faint and far off the sound of the names of chiefs then famous for their prowess—Eormenric, Ongetheow, Hygelac, Fin Folcwalda, Hnæf. They belong still to the days of history that comes to us transformed by the poets who struck the glee-beam in the halls of the great chiefs, and shaped their deeds into triumphant song, in which their enemies often figured as monster-forms, and they themselves were raised to demigods.

Spirit and Aim of the Poem.

It is to be remembered that such songs come down to us, whether First-English or Scandinavian, never in their own first voice, always as echoes. The fact that we have "Beowulf," or Widsith's song, in Anglo-Saxon—language not found on the Continent, but formed in this country by fusion of dialects after the Low-German tribes of settlers on our shores had joined to form one people—compels us to recognise that in the most ancient pieces of our literature, which had their rise in the old home upon the mainland, we have not the old songs themselves, but early reproductions of them.

But it is to be remembered that in the days when poems were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition, and their delivery was entrusted to a distinct class of reciters, the hearers looked for strict fidelity in the recital.* But the exact words in the dialect of the Mergings, as it was spoken when Widsith began his travel among men by going as a young poet in the train of Queen Ealhhild on a mission of peace to the court of Eormanric—those, of course, could not have been the same words that we read in the First-English poem, which seems to have given us their sense, and to have included some additions to their matter.

We return now to the poem, at the place where we

* "E. W." I. 176, 177.

broke off, the reference to Offa, who, as a hero of the fourth century, might have been named in the first form of the poem, and, repeating a few lines to make the sequence clear, we can, with but one more interruption, follow Widsith to the end :—

> "Offa ruled Angle ; Alewih the Danes ;
> Of all these men he was the proudest, yet
> He over Offa won no mastery,
> But earliest among men, while yet a child,
> The greatest of the kingdoms Offa won.
> None of his age won with his single sword
> More lordship ; he enlarged by Fifeldor
> His bounds towards the Mergings, and thenceforth
> Angles and Swæfs were forced to be as one.
> Hrothwulf and Hrothgar, uncle and nephew, held
> Peace with each other longest after they
> Cast out the race of Vikings, bowed the point
> Of Ingeld's sword, hewed down at Heorot
> The host of Heathobards."

Here is again the island duel—holmgangr—of Offa at Fifeldor.* Offa's father, Wermund, King of Denmark, was old and blind. Offa was of vigorous frame, silent, and supposed to be wanting in the faculties a ruler needs. Athislus, King of Sweden, called on Wermund to resign his kingdom and place it under the Swede. The despised Offa then spoke ; he declared that Wermund had a son who challenged the son of Athislus, with whom might be joined the strongest champion Athislus could send as his companion ; one man against two, he would engage in combat for the sovereignty. Offa's victory annexed to Denmark the lands of the Swedish king.† Here the legend is pro-

* "E. W." I. 338.

† The legend in "Saxo Grammaticus" tells that when Offa, preparing for the duel, had broken every sword supplied to him by the mere force with which he waved it through the air, Wermund remembered a sword of magic power which he had buried. It was dug up for Offa's use, but found to be so thin and rust-eaten, that Offa was told not to wave it, for it

bably referred to its right ground—the lands about the Elbe and Eider, occupied by the Angles and the people of North Sweven.

In this part of the song also we have Hrothgar, whose Mead Hall Beowulf went to protect, associated, as he is in the poem of "Beowulf" in two places,* with his nephew Hrothulf, son of his brother Halga; Hrothulf, who was the Rolf Kraka of Northern legend. The song of Widsith now becomes again for some lines recital of the names of tribes, before it returns to celebration of the poet's friends upon the gift-stool.

50] "Thus far I travelled through strange lands, and learnt
Of good and evil in the spacious world,
Parted from home friends and dear kindred, far
The ways I followed. Therefore I can sing
And tell a tale, recount in the Mead Hall
How men of high race gave rich gifts to me.
I was with Huns and Hreth Goths, with the Swedes,
And Geáts, and with the South Danes. I have seen
The Wenlas and the Wærnas, and have been
With the Vikings. And also I have been
Among the Gefthas and the Winedas,
And Gefflegas; with Angles, and with Swæfs,
And Æenenas; with Saxons and with Sycgs,
With Sword-men, with the Hrons, and with the Deans;
With Heathoreams and with Thuringians,
With Throwends, with Burgundians, there I had
A circlet given to me by Guthhere,
A welcome treasure for reward of song.
That was no tardy king! With Franks I was,
And Frisians, and Frumtings, with the Rugs,
And with the Gloms, and with the Rúmwealhs;

he broke that also, no hope remained. He used the old sword in the duel, but for a long time forebore to strike, lest he should break it. The blind Wermund despaired and was about to drown himself, when at last he heard the first stroke of the sword Skrep cutting a champion in half from top to bottom.

* "Beowulf," lines 1017, 1181.

[70] So was I with Albuin in Italy;
He of all men was readiest of hand
In shaping praise, most liberal of heart
In sharing rings, bright collars, Eádwin's son.

And I was with the Serkings and Serings,
And I was with the Greeks and with the Fins,
With Cæsar, master over joyous towns.
Wiolane I saw, and Wilna, and the realm
Of Wala; with the Scots I was, and Picts,
And with the Scrid-Fins, and the Lid-Vikings,
With Leons, Lombards, Hæthens, Hæreths, Hundings.
And I was also with the Israelites;
With the Ex-Syrings, Hebrews, Indians,
And with the Egyptians, Medes and Persians;
And with the Myrgings; with the Mofdings then,
And once more with the Myrgings. Then I saw
The Amothings, East Thyrings, and the Eols,
Istas, and Idumingas. And I was
[88-89] With Eormanric, and all the while the King
Of Goths was good to me. Chief in his burgh,
A collar of six hundred sceats of gold
Counted in coin, he gave me—beaten gold—
Which I, home coming, in requital gave
To Eádgil, my protector and my friend;
For he, Prince of the Myrgings, gave to me
The land I hold, my father's heritage.
Then Ealhhild, Eádwin's daughter, noble queen,
Gave me another. Over many lands,
I have prolonged her praise, when my task was
To say in song where under Heaven I knew
The gold-wreathed Queen most happy in her gifts.

When I and Skilling for our conquering lord
With clear voice raised the song, loud to the harp,
The sound was music; many a stately man,
Who well knew what was right, then said in words,
[108] That never had they heard a happier song.

[109] Thence throughout all the country of the Goths
I travelled; ever sought the best of ways,
Among the followers of Eormanric.
Hethea, and Beadeca I sought; and sought

The Herelings, Emerca, Fridla ; sought
The East Goth, Unwen's father, wise and good ;
Sought Secca, Becca, Theodric, Seafola ;
Sought Heathoric, and Seafola and Hlithe,
And Incgentheow ; and Eádwin too I sought,
And Elsa, Ægelmund, Hungar ; and sought
Proud bands of the With-Myrgings ; sought Wulfhere
And Wyrmhere. Often was unceasing war
Where with hard sword the army of the Hræds
About the woods of Vistula must fight
For home against the folk of Attila.
Rædhere I sought, and Rondhere, Giselhere
And Rumstan, Withergield and Freotheric,
[130] Wudga and Hama. They were not the worst
Of friends, howe'er they be the last I name.
Full oft flew whining from that band the shaft,
The shrieking spear, against the cruel horde
Where Wudga, Hama, chiefs adorned with gold,
Sought vengeance for their warriors and their wives.

So have I ever found in journeying
That he is to the dwellers in a land
The dearest, to whom God gives, while he lives
Here upon earth, to hold rule over men.
Thus wandering, they who shape songs for men
Pass over many lands, and tell their need,
And speak their thanks, and ever, south or north,
Meet some one skilled in songs and free in gifts,
Who would be raised among his friends to fame
And do brave deeds till light and life are gone.
He who has thus wrought himself praise shall have
A settled glory underneath the stars.

Thus the old poem takes its place among songs in the Mead Hall, and allies wide travel to the wanderings of those who sang them. There is more to be said of Widsith, but this must be said as part of a consideration of the nature of the poet's art among us in its earliest heroic forms.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCÓP.

SHAPERS of Pictures, Sculptures, Buildings, speak to the eye in words that need no living interpreter, because they rest in space and have one lasting form. Shapers of Dance, Music, and Poetry, speak to the eye and ear in works that need living interpreters to give them form. They do not rest in space; they move in time.

Rhythm.

Proportion of time is in all rhythm; and there can be no rhythm without movement. In Dance the rhythm is by movements of the body; in Music it is by movements of inarticulate sounds; in Poetry by movement of the sounds in human speech.

In earliest times the rhythmic movement of the body was joined with the rhythm of music to the rhythm of words; and the three musical arts—dance, music, poetry—were one.* Thus in the earliest Greek dithyrambs the

* Altenglische Metrik," von Dr. J. Schipper, Ordentl. Professor der Englischen Philologie an der K. K. Universität in Wien (Bonn, 1881). Prof. Schipper's book is the best treatise yet written upon English metre. Help is to be obtained also from "A History of English Rhythms," by Edwin Guest, M.A. (London, 1838; second edition, revised by Prof. W. W. Skeat, 1882); and from "Chapters on English Metre," by Joseph B. Mayor, M.A. (London, 1886), which refer rather to the less ancient forms of versification, but discuss the views of Dr. Guest, of Dr. Abbott, and also of Mr. A. J. Ellis, whose important studies of the history of English pronunciation include studies of English metre.

measured music of the voice was aided not only by the flute or lyre, but by harmonious movements also of the body during recitation. So it was that the story told with animation by one public reciter, told afterwards in action by two, became a drama.

So it was also that the earliest Teutonic poetry—of which First-English is a part—united the three forms of movement. The Anglo-Saxon Scóp or Gleeman added to his rhythmic chant the emphasis of chords struck on a rude harp—the glee-beam; and this had for its successor the crowd or rustic fiddle, to which, in the days of Elizabeth, a poor after-comer of the gleemen might sing "Chevy Chace" with rough untutored voice, and stir the heart of Philip Sidney like a trumpet. Extended reading power altered more and more the old conditions for the spread of thought, and there remain to us now only a few desolate street singers to represent the old high office of the Scóp, in whom there was embodied the whole literature of his people. He was at once author and publisher; creator of the new, maintainer of the old, diffuser of all; and diffusion was, for all but a few, by his living utterance, with the whole power of his genius applied to action and expression of his song. The words he shaped in solitude he made emphatic with the rhythm of gesture and the rhythmic touch of his harp. Like the Scóp Widsith, his wealth hung on the favour of strong chiefs, who dealt out gifts in the Mead Hall, and were free givers to those who could best sing their praise. To sing their praise well was to raise it by a telling of their deeds that showed them glorious in the bright light of imagination. It was well with the Scóp when he lifted living men to the ideal, and set forth also the deeds of their forefathers and the history of the life that was about them, shaped into forms that pleased the childhood of our English world. A strong enemy, unworthy of enduring fame, was well lost in the tale of contest with a monster who had

The Scóp.

magic power. A strong chief, worthy of enduring fame, might have his strength well fabled in a handgrip with the force of thirty men. The chief's rough followers exulted in each tale, and many must have shown their interest by taking part in its utterance with gestures of their own. Such is the instinct of all revellers whose hearts and minds go with the song they hear. At this day, we are told, chanters of tales who shorten long nights in the Orkneys put life into an active ring of listeners who keep time to the chant, and follow with imitative rhythmic action all its changes of expression. He was the best Scóp who had the best invention, the best ear for music, and the best skill as an actor.

The Scóp was poet above all, and should have power for the utterance of his inventions. But if he happened to want skill in recitation, there were entertainers who were Gleemen only, who had not rank, as the Scóp had, with the warriors themselves, but who were simply entertainers They sang, recited, jested, and sometimes perhaps, in later days, included among their accomplishments those of the "plagman," or player, sleight of hand, and gymnastics. But Scóp was the name given to Homer and Virgil; he was Shaper, Maker, or—to express the same thought in a Greek form – Poet. It has been suggested that when his genius for invention was not joined to a good delivery he associated himself with a Gleeman, who recited for him; and that this might be meant by the "I and Scilling" in the song of Widsith: "When I and Scilling lifted up the song."*

The Scóp travelled far, and the poetic aim of Widsith was only to fill the imagination with a sense of his wide wanderings, by a recital of the names of chiefs and tribes in a world wider than that of the tribe that heard the song.

* "Æsthetische Studien zur angelsächsischen Poesie von Dr. Reinhold Merbot" (Breslau, 1883). A practical pamphlet, very useful for the number of citations from the Anglo-Saxon poets to support its reasonings as to the nature of the Anglo-Saxon poet's art and office.

In so doing he also magnified his office. We may read his poem as an early lesson in geography. It was meant to be that. But it was meant chiefly to suggest the Master Poet's wandering from tribe to tribe, carrying to each, in his songs, some knowledge of its neighbour's deeds. It was the song of a wandering Scóp that brought knowledge of the troubles of Hrothgar to the court of Hygelac,* and stirred Beowulf to cross the sea for fight with Grendel.

The reputation and the profit of a Scóp—as of a modern poet, singer, actor—depended on his power of delighting those whom he addressed. He who attained wide reputation overshone for a time the Scóp or Gleeman who might be attached to any hall he visited. During the time of his stay the gifts were showered chiefly upon him. The Scóp attached to some strong chief might also find himself supplanted by another with more skill to please. In one of these old poems that have come down to us— "The Lament of Deor"—the whole theme is the complaint of a Scóp who has been made a wanderer because another won from him the favour of his chief. This poem, which is in the Exeter Book, belongs, like "Widsith," to the beginning of First-English Literature, and is known also as "The Singer's Consolation." *The Lament of Deor.*

Deor in his trouble reflects that as Weland and Beadohild, Geat and Mæthhild, Theoderic and Eormanric's people, had conquered their griefs, so might he. That is the Singer's Consolation. "Weland," he begins, "knew in himself the worm of exile. The prudent chief endured sorrows; had grief and weariness, winter-cold wretchedness for companions; oft experienced misery; after Nithhad had laid him, unhappy man, in captivity with a tough sinew-band. Her brothers' death was not so sore in mind to Beadohild as her own affair," &c. The continental story in the "Edda" is that

* "E. W." I. 280.

Nithhad attacked Weland, the great armourer, for his wealth, carried him off to an island, and made him work for him. But Weland killed Nithhad's sons, gave a narcotic to his daughter Beadohild, and escaped, leaving her pregnant. Weland was the old word for a smith; but we have English traditions of Wayland Smith, including a cromlech in Berkshire, called Wayland's smithy, and we may imagine, if we will, that Weland himself, who made Beowulf's war shirt, came to England with one army of the invaders. Six miles from the Berkshire "Wayland's smithy" are the Nythe farms, whose name reminds us of his enemy Nithhad. In this way, in fact, Mr. Haigh has argued that Weland, Nithhad, Geat, Mæthhild, Theoderic, and Eormanric, may all be traced in the district in which Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire meet, and all lived in the fifth or sixth centuries. Of himself Deor says, naming as the successful rival who has won from him the substantial friendship of his chief, another Scóp, who is celebrated in several Teutonic sagas:—

"A sorrowing one sits deprived of happiness; in his mind it grows dark; he thinks to himself that his share of woes is endless. Then he may think that the wise had changes enough through the world. To many a chief he dispenses honour, constant success; to others a portion of woe. That I will say of myself, that I was for a while a Scóp of the Heodenings, dear to my lord, Deor was my name. I had a good following, a faithful lord, for many winters; until that now Heorrenda, a song-crafty man, has obtained the landright, which the refuge of warriors gave to me before."

When reference is here made to Weland and other persons of the tales found in old Scandinavian literature, the forms of the names are not Scandinavian but Teutonic, and the source of each reference may be an earlier Teutonic form of sagas afterwards found in the "Edda." Benjamin Thorpe suggested that Heorrenda, who supplanted Deor, may be the Horant of the German legends of Gudrun, and

Ettmüller, who regarded this as the oldest Anglo-Saxon poem, found the Hetele of Gudrun in Heoden, chief of the Heodenings. Müllenhoff has found in the metre of the poem traces of an ancient strophic form, which he has endeavoured hypothetically to restore. A very noticeable feature in "The Lament of Deor," peculiar to it among First-English poems, is the use of a line of refrain—"That was got over, and so this may be"—wherein lies the consolation of Deor in remembering the griefs of others with his own. In a poem that consists only of forty-two lines it occurs six times.

In shaping verses the First-English poet marked his rhythm by Accent. In Greek and Latin, natural quantity of sound, determining the time required for utterance, was used to express rhythmical time, without much reference to accent upon words. The Teutonic poets used art in the management of rhythm by accent, without much reference to natural quantity.

First-English Versification—Accent.

But since accent is stress of sound upon a syllable, accent gives emphasis; for stress of sound upon the syllable must force it more upon attention. Whatever syllable is, by such stress upon it, made emphatic, must in its nature be entitled to that place which, in the mechanism of verse, will claim for it the chief share of attention. The First-English accentuation of words in verse, and indeed in ordinary speech, recognised this fact to the utmost. The chief accent in every word rested upon the syllable in which its meaning chiefly lay—the root syllable—avoiding syllables of less significance. Such accent never fell upon a prefix or a suffix.

If we describe the rise and fall of tone inseparable from all connected speech by division into "high tone" and "low tone," and add "no tone" for the sound on which there is no stress at all, and which is next neighbour to silence, we have in a word like "merrily" the high tone on the first, or root

syllable; no tone on the middle syllable; and the low tone on the suffix. First-English poetry, although two high tones might sometimes follow in succession, admitted no material departure from this principle. The result was that in words without a prefix the high tone fell usually upon the first syllable of a word. Accent in Greek or Latin falls on one of the last three syllables of a word; in French, on one of the last two, and usually on the last. The romance usage thus differs from the Teutonic in not requiring stress of sound to correspond precisely with the stress of thought. There is, for example, no part of the thought of the word in the accented *a* of the word restor*a*tion; it only recalls a sign of conjugation common to hundreds of words that have hundreds of unlike meanings. It was not until after the Norman Conquest that the usages of French pronunciation could so far affect the sound of English words in verse as to allow a poet to eke out his measure by putting a high tone upon the last syllable of such a word as "merrily."

In shaping verses, then, a First-English poet never broke the bond that joined, in every word, the accent to the sense. And even now, much of the strength of homely English lies in this true fellowship of thought and sound.

In the Alliteration—called by Germans *Stabreim*—that adorned his verse, the Scóp was true to the same principle.

Alliteration.

Every device of rhyme that calls attention to a word, by so doing gives emphasis. Emphasis on a weak syllable can do no more than satisfy the ear. But here also the First-English poet married sound to sense, and applied the emphasis of alliteration only at the points of greatest stress in the expression of thought. He strengthened emphasis on the chief syllables of the chief words. Thus Accent, everywhere significant of the true course of thought, was aided by Alliteration upon those parts of the rhythmic utterance in which the main thought had its most substantial expression.

This construction gave to the form of First-English poetry inherent dignity and grace that could not wholly be destroyed even by a weak reciter. But a Scóp who was whole master of his art could still further heighten the expression everywhere by those subtle variations of tone and modulations of voice, now soft, now terrible, through which the passions speak and the true spirit of poetry within one man can breathe itself into the hearts of all.

There are three forms of the rhyme by which verses are adorned and linked together. They are Alliteration, Assonance, and the Full Rhyme to which alone the name of rhyme is commonly applied.

Alliteration is by the use of identical consonant sounds, or limitation to vowel sounds, usually not the same, at the beginnings of words. Assonance is by the use of identical vowel sounds placed neither first nor last, but within words of which the consonants are not alike. In full rhyme there are at the ends of words identical sounds, which may include both vowels and consonants. Though full rhyme might here and there, be imitated from without, it made no part whatever of the system of our oldest verse.

First-English verse was formed of two half-lines, each with two accents, united by alliteration into one long line of four accents. The three first of the four accented words, two in the first half-line and one in the second, were alliterated, and the letter of alliteration in the second line was looked upon as the chief letter. Its emphasis had grown in repetition.

Assonance comes by use of the same vowels, not at the beginning of words, but within them, and not followed by corresponding consonants. This aid to rhythm was used in the Romance languages, and produced even some germs of rhyme in Greek and Latin. Its later development in Latin monastic poetry passed on to the full rhyme. But the transition was most aided by the

Assonance and Full Rhyme.

suggestive jingle of like tense and case endings, that tempted versifiers to go on to the shaping by design of rhymes that frequently occurred by accident. They were the rhymed Latin verses of the Church that suggested the occasional and rare use of a few rhymes in our First-English alliterative poems.

Accents and Syllables.

Although there was no counting of Syllables for the construction of an Anglo-Saxon verse, their number was not disregarded. Time being kept in recitation, many or few unemphatic words between the main words by which time was marked produced effects of animation, tumult, weighty and deliberate expression. This gave occasion for a finer skill in shaping of the song, and added yet another help to the attainment of full harmony in gesture, music, word, and thought. And beyond this, again, there was a freedom used in deviation from strict rule, when thought rose higher for the change. There are deviations also which may be ascribed to fault in the one written copy from which usually all our knowledge of a First-English poem is derived.

The Seafarer.

One of the finest of these old poems, "The Seafarer," in the Exeter Book, is thus made difficult by faults in the transmission. Building an allegory upon our English desire towards the sea, it represents, under the figure of seafaring, the leaving Earth behind and its unstable joys, in search for a life beyond this life, through lonely watching and striving, against all cold discouragements, and through all trial in the tumults of the spiritual storm, uncared for by those who choose Earth and its pleasures. It is again a Traveller's Song; but here the far path is the Soul's. Taking now and then some liberties with the measure, that may yet help to suggest to modern ears the free swing of its music, I will try to represent the form of First-English alliterative verse in a translation of

The Seafarer.

" I may sing of myself now
A song that is true,
Can tell of wide travel,
The toil of hard days;
How oft through long seasons
I suffered and strove,
Abiding within my breast
Bitterest care;
How I sailed among sorrows
In many a sea;
The wild rise of the waves,
The close watch of the night
At the dark prow in danger
Of dashing on rock,
Folded in by the frost,
My feet bound by the cold
In chill bands, in the breast
The heart burning with care.
The soul of the sea-weary
Hunger assailed.

Knows not he who finds happiest
Home upon earth
How I lived through long winter
In labour and care,
On the icy-cold ocean,
An exile from joy,
Cut off from dear kindred,
Encompassed with ice.
Hail flew in hard showers,
And nothing I heard
But the wrath of the waters,
The icy-cold way;
At times the swan's song;
In the scream of the gannet
I sought for my joy,
In the moan of the sea-whelp
For laughter of men,
In the song of the sea-mew
For drinking of mead.

Starlings answered the storm
Beating stones on the cliff,
Icy-feathered, and often
The eagle would shriek,
Wet of wing.
Not one home-friend could feel
With the desolate soul;
For he little believes
To whom life's joy belongs
In the town, lightly troubled
With dangerous tracks,
Vain with high spirit
And wanton with wine,
How often I wearily
Held my sea-way.

The night shadows darkened,
It snowed from the north;
The rime bound the rocks;
The hail rolled upon earth,
Coldest of corn:
Therefore now is high heaving
In thoughts of my heart,
That my lot is, to learn[1]
The wide joy of waters,
The whirl of salt spray.
Often desire drives
My soul to depart,
That the home of the strangers
Far hence I may seek.

There is no man among us
So proud in his mind,
Nor so good in his gifts,
Nor so gay in his youth,
Nor so daring in deeds,
Nor so dear to his lord,
That his soul never stirred
At the thought of seafaring,
Or what his great Master
Will do with him yet.
He hears not the harp,

Heeds not giving of rings,
Has to woman no will,
And no hope in the world,
Nor in aught there is else
But the wash of the waves.
He lives ever longing
Who looks to the sea.

Groves bud with green,
The hills grow fair,
Gay shine the fields,
The world's astir:
All this but warns
The willing mind
To set the sail,
For so he thinks
Far on the waves
To win his way.
With woeful note
The cuckoo warns,
The summer's warden sings,
And sorrow rules
The heart-store bitterly.
No man can know,
Nursed in soft ease,
The burden borne
By those who fare
The farthest from their friends.

In the soul's secret chamber
My mind now is set,
My heart's thought, on wide waters,
The home of the whale;
It wanders away
Beyond limits of land:
Comes again to me, yearning
With eager desire;
Loud cries the lone-flier,
And stirs the mind's longing
To travel the way that is trackless,
The death-way over the flood.

For my will to my Master's pleasure
Is warmer than this dead life
That is lent us on land.
I believe not that earth-blessings
Ever abide.
Ever of three things one,
To each ere the severing hour:
Old age, sickness, or slaughter,
Will force the doomed soul to depart.

Therefore for each of the earls,
Of those who shall afterwards name them,
This is best laud from the living
In last words spoken about him:—
He worked ere he went his way,
When on earth, against wiles of the foe,
With brave deeds overcoming the devil.
His memory cherished
By children of men,
His glory grows ever
With angels of God,
In life everlasting
Of bliss with the bold.

Passed are the days of the pride
Of the kingdoms of earth.
Kings are no more, and kaisers.
None count out,
As once they did, their gifts of gold,
When that made them most great,
And Man judged that they lived
As Lords most High.
That fame is all fallen,
Those joys are all fled;
The weak ones abiding
Lay hold on the world:
By their labour they win.

High fortune is humbled;
Earth's haughtiness ages
And wastes,—as now withers
Each man from the world:

Old age is upon him
And bleaches his face;
He is grey-haired and grieves,
Knows he now must give up
The old friends he cherished,
Chief children of earth.
The husk of flesh,
When life is fled,
Shall taste no sweetness,
Feel no sore;
Is in its hand no touch;
Is in its brain no thought.
Though his born brother
Strew gold in the grave,
Bury him pompously
Borne to the dead,
Entomb him with treasure,
The trouble is vain:
The soul of the sinful
His gold may not save
From the awe before God,
Though he hoarded it heedfully
While he lived here.

Great awe is in presence of God.*
The firm ground trembles before Him
Who strongly fixed its foundations,
The limits of earth and the heavens.
Fool is he without fear of the Lord;
To him will come death unforeseen:
Happy is he who is lowly of life;
To him will come honour from heaven:
The Creator will strengthen his soul
Because he put trust in His power.

* This line begins a new leaf, and although there is no sign of its removal, Benjamin Thorpe, in editing the Exeter Book, supposed that a leaf had been lost from the book between the preceding line and this, which he believed to belong to the close of another poem. But surely there is a clear sequence of thought.

Rude will should be ruled
And restrained within bound
And clean in its ways with men.
If every man
Kept measure in mind
With friend and with foe,*
. . . . . .
More force is in fate,
In the Maker more might,
Than in thought of a man.

Let us look to the home
Where in truth we can live,
And then let us be thinking
How thither to come:
For then we too shall toil
That our travel may reach
To delight never ending,
When life is made free
In the love of the Lord
In the height of the heavens!
May we thank the All Holy
Who gave us this grace,—
The Wielder of glory,
The Lord everlasting,—
In time without end! Amen."

In this poem there is the touch of feeling that, in many forms throughout our literature, dwells on the travel of the Christian from this world to that which is to come.

Not in such poems of our early Christian days, but in "Beowulf," in "Widsith," in any pieces that may trace descent from the heroic songs of a pre-Christian time, there is suggestion of yet another principle of versification—the arrangement of the verses into four-line ballad form. In the chapter upon "Beowulf" we have seen how the course of criticism is affected by this theory.† It starts with observation of the strophic form in poems of

Strophic Metre.

* Defect here in MS. † "E. W." I. 347, 348.

the elder Edda. Then it traces the form back to a time earlier than the earliest that can be assigned to any piece of Scandinavian verse or prose; for in this narrative we have not yet reached the time when Scandinavia takes a definite place in the history of literature. There is given, hypothetically, remote origin to a form of verse which unites eight half-lines, or four lines, of alliterative verse into a strophe complete in itself and ending with a full pause. The theory proceeds then to find evidences of a like strophic form in the most ancient Teutonic poems. Not one of them will read straight into stanzas; but they will contain passages in which a sentence happens to reach its completion eight half-lines beyond the place at which some other sentence ended. Wherever this happens the passage is declared to form a strophe. All passages of this kind having been picked out, we are free to regard them as undisturbed traces of the original construction of the poem. The intervening parts are then, as far as possible, read into stanzas by transposing lines and passages, by casting out lines as interpolations, by conjuring with help of theoretical interpolators, A, B, C, and then declaring the whole theory to be proved because it has been substantiated by a few dozen—in the case of "Widsith" about three dozen—of confident guesses. In this way Karl Müllenhoff, the founder of the theory,* points out that in "Widsith" a strophe could be made of lines 10—13, and that the list of chiefs in lines 18 to 33 could be arranged in four strophes; which, indeed, was likely enough where the nature of the subject matter would cause pauses to be frequent. The theorists may have observed a truth. There is great ingenuity, not seldom a happy ingenuity, in their attempts to bring opinion

* In "Nordalbingische Studien," vol. i. (Kiel, 1844); in his dissertation on the Weissenbrunner Prayer, "De Carmine Wessofontano et de versu ac stropharum usu apud Germanos antiquissimos" (Berlin, 1861); in Haupt's "Zeitschrift für deutsche Alterthum," vol. xi.

to proof. But it ought not to be overlooked that the proof rests usually upon a large elaboration of conjecture. A certain anticipation has to be submitted to experiment, and it is easily confirmed by changes of the facts on which experiment is made. However positive the air of fact assumed by what is really no more than opinion, this method of study is not scientific.

A critical analysis of the song of the Scóp Widsith by Herfmann Möller,* based on the theory of strophic form, will serve as an example. First, it is assumed that this short poem is formed of two poems by different authors, which have been joined together by another author, and subjected by various hands to alteration and interpolation. The beginning of the original poem is said to be at line 50,† and it is said to have ended at line 108.‡ The following journey to the land of the Goths, lines 109—130,§ cannot, it is said, stand where it does. It must have been moved out of an earlier part of this poem, or belong to another Widsith poem. If moved out of an earlier part, its place was after the lines 88, 89.‖ The giver of the ring or collar was "certainly" not Eormanric, as the poem itself says, but Albuin. Albuin could have given it; but to ascribe the gift to Eormanric would have been fiction. Albuin was bound to give a ring to the poet because his liberality is praised, but the poem nowhere tells us that he did actually give a ring; and it is quite certain that when Widsith came home he must

Was *Widsith* strophic?

* "Das Altenglische Volksepos in der ursprünglichen Strophischen Form. Von Hermann Möller," (Kiel, 1883).

† In the translation, "E. W." II. 9, it is the line "[Thus] far I travelled through strange lands, and learnt."

‡ "E. W." II. 10, "That never had they heard a happier song."

§ "E.W." II. 10, "Thence throughout all the country of the Goths," to "And Rumstan, Withergield and Freotheric, Wudga and Hama."

‖ "E. W." II. 9, "And I was with Eormanric, and all the while the King of Goths was good to me."

have given to his lord the ring of this chief, who was friendly to him; not that of another.

Lines 75—87* stand between the praise of Albuin and the gift of the ring. Müllenhoff had already struck these out as an interpolation. Also there must be struck out lines 88, 89, which mention Eormanric,† and belong to the lines 109—130. They could not belong to the original poem (lines 50—108) because it had been already said in line 57 that Widsith was among the Goths.‡ The whole body of verses, 88, 89, and 109—130, could not have belonged to the first song—coming, say, before line 64 or between lines 67 and 70§—because a song which said so little of the Burgundians and Lombards could not have treated in such detail of the Goths.

After striking out lines 75 to 89,‖ the original song, from lines 50 to 108, it is said, stands written in four-lined stanzas. The number of lines in its introduction (50—56) is 4+3. Here we have three too many for one stanza, and for two stanzas one too few. Either the three last, or the second, third, and sixth, may have been interpolated. More probably the second stanza has lost its second line, which may have contained some dependent clause. In the following names of peoples, Huns and Goths in line 57, and the Scandinavian people—Swedes, Goths, and Danes—stand very well together. Then in lines 59—62 follow peoples of the Cimbric

* "E. W." II. 10, "And I was with the Serkings and Serings," to "Istas and Idumingas."

† "And I was with Eormanric, and all the while the King of Goths was good to me."

‡ "I was with Huns and Hrethgoths."

§ Line 64, "and with Thuringians, with Throwends." Line 67 ends "That was no tardy King." Line 70 is the line translated "So was I with Albuin in Italy."

‖ "E. W." II. 9, "And I was with the Serkings," to "the King of Goths was good to me."

peninsula and coast of the North Sea, but the Gepids* and Wends in line 60 must have been interpolated by some one whose ideas of geography were wrong. Line 60 must be removed, therefore, from between lines 59 and 61, and placed in the preceding strophe, which at present contains only two lines. We now have the best geographical order. Line 63† is a later interpolation. Lines 68, 69,‡ if in their place, have lost a line before them, and a line perhaps between them that made the strophe. Lines consisting of mere names of peoples could very easily be dropped.

There is much more of the same critical sleight-of-hand applied to the supposed first song; and then to the supposed second song, which is found in lines 88, 90, and 109 to 130.

Moreover, lines 10—34 are also separated from the rest as another ancient and separate song,§ wholly independent of lines 50—130. In its opening strophe, lines 10—13, lines 11 and 12, it is said, must have been transposed. After this comes a four-lined strophe, lines 14—17, interpolated by a man who had classical knowledge; this was "clearly" the same interpolator A who added the lines 75—78, for line 76‖ was made by one who knew line 20; interpolator A, therefore, knew both the songs, and it was he who fused them into one. Lines 35—59, concerning Offa, Alewih, Hrothulf, and Ingeld, consist of five-lined strophes. Four-lined strophes are more ancient than five-lined. Lines 41—44 seem to be the proper close to lines

* "Among the Gefthas, and the Winedas."

† "With the Hrons, and with the Deans, with Heathoreams."

‡ "With Franks I was,
And Frisians, and Frumtings, with the Rugs,
And with the Gloms, and with the Rúmwealhs."

§ "E. W." II. 3, "Much have I asked and learnt of men in rule," to "Hringwald the Herefaras' King was named."

‖ "And I was with the Greeks and with the Fins, with Cæsar" is the matter of line 60, and line 20 contained "The Greeks were under Cæsar, Cælic ruled the Fins."

10—34. If that be so, either the last editor of the whole, or an interpolator B, must have written the six lines 35—41, and the five lines 45—49.*

The nine lines of opening were supplied by the Scóp who finally put all these pieces together.

Enough has been said to show how largely this method of destructive criticism rests upon conjecture; and how little the common repetition of such phrases as "clearly" or "it is certain," can give certainty to the most ingenious system of three-piled hypotheses. And when all's done, where is our poem?

A Scóp of old time raised in the Mead Hall a song that broadened for its revellers the sense of life. He used his own way of travel for appeal to the imagination by recital of the names of tribes and chiefs over far tracts of the surrounding world. He magnified his office by suggestions of gifts received in the halls of other mighty men; and, while so doing, encouraged liberality towards men of his craft, who gave the gift of fame. The song pleased, and its numbering of the tribes of men underwent, we may believe, some changes in the later singing. But it never ceased to be one song, among the songs that added to the joy and vigour of the feast. A student of geography might wisely study with the keenest interest its long recitals of the names of tribes. But in doing so he would be studying geography, not literature. The student of literature asks how the old gleeman shaped it to delight and teach; out of what forms of life it arose; and to what forms of life it added strength and pleasure. He does not sit at the table of a poet bent upon destructive distillation of the banquet spread on it. He will see the sparkle of the

The Spirit of First-English Poetry.

* Lines 35 to 41 are from "Offa ruled Angle" to "more lordship." Lines 45 to 49 are from "Hrothwulf and Hrothgar" to "the host of Heathobards."

poet's wine, enjoy its flavour and its fragrance, feel life the brighter for a draught of it—wine, as it is, of life; and he will not cover the table with stills, retorts, crucibles, reagents of all kinds, and promise his host an opinion, not of his wine, but of the ashes left of it. The parallel, however, fails in one respect. A method of criticism that is essentially unscientific cannot succeed in reducing works of genius to anything so substantial as ashes. It ends rather in smoke.

There is a practical spirit in all Anglo-Saxon literature, and in all of it that has been transmitted to us a deeply earnest view of the broad truths of life. This may be due partly to the fact that we have only what the teachers of religion, through whom we receive what has come down to us, transcribed because they thought it worth preserving. But time also is in that respect a teacher of religion. The trivial passes from man's memory. Toys break; truths last for ever.

One more piece from the collection in the Exeter Book—a piece in which the poet glanced across the life of his own time, and did not omit the Scóp himself from his picture of the world in little—I will endeavour to represent in modern English.

The Fortunes of Men.

THE FORTUNES OF MEN.

"Full often it falls out,
By fortune from God,
That a man and a maiden
May marry in this world,
Find cheer in the child
Whom they cherish and care for,
Tenderly tend it,
Until the time comes,
Beyond the first years,
When the young limbs increasing
Grown firm with life's fulness,
Are formed for their work.

Fond father and mother,
So guide it and feed it,
Give gifts to it, clothe it:
God only can know
What lot to its latter days
Life has to bring.
To some that make music
In life's morning hour
Pining days are appointed
Of plaint at the close.
One the wild wolf shall eat,
Hoary haunter of wastes:
His mother shall mourn
The small strength of a man.

One shall sharp hunger slay;
One shall the storms beat down;
One be destroyed by darts,
One die in war.
One shall live losing
The light of his eyes,
Feel blindly with fingers;
And one, lame of foot,
With sinew-wound wearily
Wasteth away,
Musing and mourning,
With death in his mind.

One, failing feathers,
Shall fall from the height
Of the tall forest tree:
Yet he trips as though flying,
Plays proudly in air
Till he reaches the point
Where the woodgrowth is weak;
Life then whirls in his brain,
Bereft of his reason
He sinks to the root,
Falls flat on the ground,
His life fleeting away.

Afoot on the far-ways,
His food in his hand,

One shall go grieving,
And great be his need,
Press dew on the paths
Of the perilous lands
Where the stranger may strike,
Where live none to sustain.
All shun the desolate
For being sad.

One the great gallows shall
Have in its grasp,
Strained in stark agony
Till the soul's stay,
The bone-house, is bloodily
All broken up;
When the harsh raven hacks
Eyes from the head,
The sallow-coated slits
The soulless man.
Nor can he shield from shame,
Scare with his hands,
Off from their eager feast
Prowlers of air.
Lost is his life to him,
Left is no breath,
Bleached on the gallows-beam
Bides he his doom;
Cold death-mists close round him
Called the Accursed.

One shall burn in the bale-fire,
The bright cruel flame
Shall devour the man destined
To die in its maw;
In the red raging glow,
Quick the rending of life;
The woman shall wail
And shall weep when she sees
Her boy, her beloved one,
Laid over the brands.

One shall die by the dagger,
In wrath, drenched with ale,

Wild through wine, on the mead bench,
Too swift with his words;
Through the hand that brings beer,
Through the gay boon companion,
His mouth has no measure,
His mood no restraint;
Too lightly his life
Shall the wretched one lose,
Undergo the great ill,
Be left empty of joy.
When they speak of him slain
By the sweetness of mead,
His comrades shall call him
One killed by himself.

To one God shall grant
To get through in his youth
All the days of distress,
That, his sorrow dispersed,
His old age becomes easy
With use of his goods,
His life becomes lucky
And gladdened with love,
His caskets and mead-cups
As costly and full
As any can earn
To bestow on his own.

So does God diversely
Deal out to men
Their lots over earth;
For so He, the Almighty Lord,
Will appoint each his portion,
Provide each his share.

Some have good hap,
And some hard days of toil;
Some glad glow of youth,
And some glory in war,
Strength in the strife;
Some sling the stone, some shoot,
Far shines the fame;
Some fling the dice with skill,

Quick at the bright board ;
In books some grow wise.
Rare gift for goldsmith's work
Is given to one,
He will make hard and handsome
The arms of a high king
Of Britain, whose bounty
Repays with broad lands ;
A much-relished requital.
And one shall rejoice
Who has charge from a chief,
And makes cheer on the bench
With a crowd of brave comrades
In martial carouse.

One shall handle the harp,
At the feet of his hero
Sit and win wealth
From the will of his Lord ;
Still quickly contriving
The throb of the cords,
The nail nimbly makes music,
Awakes a glad noise,
While the heart of the harper
Throbs, hurried by zeal.

One shall find how fierce wild birds,
How falcons are tamed,
Have the hawk on the hand,
Till the rough haggard learns
To be social, he sets
Silver rings on his feet,
And feeds thus in fetters
The feather-proud bird ;
The air-flyer flutters
Confined to a perch,
Till the Welsh bird is wrought,
By what's worn and what's done,
To be meek with the master
Who gives him his meat,
And hold to the hands
Of the dwellers in homes.

So the good God of each of us
Governs and shapes,
Above this our earth,
The employments of men;
Divides and disposes,
And deals out to each
Of his privileged people
A portion in life.
Then to God let each gratefully
Give now his thanks,
For His manifold mercies
Apportioned to man."

Before the coming of the Christian teachers the tablets of memory took nearly the whole place of what afterwards became the written record. When not carved upon stone, metal, whalebone, or other durable material, the Teutonic rune was usually cut on a piece of smooth wood, or bark of the beech or ash. The Christian poet Venantius Fortunatus, whom Abbot Hilduin called Scholasticissimus, and who, when he said "barbarian," meant always "German," writing, at the close of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century, to a bad correspondent, tells him that if paper be scarce, he may take beech-bark; and that if he be weary of the sight of Roman letters, he may try Hebrew, Achæmenian, or Greek; or, he may "write barbarous runes on ashen tables, and let the flat wand take the place of paper."* As the Latin for book was bark, liber, whence our word library, so, from the common origin of the art of writing, the First-English bóc, our book, meant also the beech-tree, of which the first book was a cutting. The cutting might be of any convenient sort. Among the pieces in the Exeter Book, which contains fragments of First-English poetry, is one in which a messenger, who has brought a letter to a lady from her lover, says, "What!

The First Writers.

* Barbara fraxineis pingatur Rhuna tabellis,
Quodque papyrus agit virgula plana valet.—vi. 18.

then he bade me entreat thee, he who inscribed (þisne beám*) this beam." But that did not mean anything like the beam of a church roof; the word was applied of old to the staff upon which runes were cut.

The manner and the marvel of old Runic writing is thus expressed in

An Anglo-Saxon Riddle.

The solution of it is that a writer—it might be a sweetheart who had many vows to send to a fair Saxon maid—had his letter-beam cut from the stump of an old jetty :—

"I was by the sand, near the sea-wall at the ocean shore. I stood fast in my first dwelling. Scarcely was there any of mankind who saw my native soil there in its loneliness. For ever at early morn the brown wave there locked me in its sea-embrace. Little I weened that I should ever speak over mead, exchanging words without a mouth. That is a deal of wonder certainly to think of, for those who do not understand such matter, how I and the knife's point, and the right hand; man's thought and the point together; push things so that I should with you, between us two alone, speak boldly my errand so that no more men had the words spoken between us two go farther to their knowledge."

The Iron people.

The Anglo-Saxons came to this country with their priests and poets, Pagan writers of runes, their warriors strong in a barbarian civilization; and while the Celts retired before them to the fastnesses of hills, they occupied and fearlessly built their towns upon the plains they tilled. These are the people who were masters of the use of iron, and from whose grave-hillocks or barrows (so named from beorh, a hill or heap, as in Beorh-hamstede, Berkhampstead), raised, when possible, on hill-tops near the sea, there have been taken in plenty the long iron swords with which they made their conquest good. Each sword

* The two forms of *th*, in "thin" and in "this," are represented by the letters Þ þ and Ð ð. These letters have to be used in the writing of First-English words. The retention of one of these letters for the short writing of "the" (þe) with careless making of the upper part of the loop, gave rise to the form "ye" for "the," which implied no change of pronunciation.

is usually almost a yard long, with a double-cutting edge and ornamented hilt, sometimes with runes inscribed on it. There have been taken also from their barrows the small girdle-knives that would serve mind or body, carving runes or cutting meat; the heads also, about a foot long, of their spears, and the long black lines of decayed wood that once were their stout shafts. The old Anglo-Saxon warriors went to their graves fully equipped, with shields laid flat over their bosoms. They were usually round wooden shields; "yellow war-boards" their poets sometimes called them, for yellow lime-tree was the wood preferred. The wood was sometimes faced with leather, and had an iron boss riveted to its centre, with an iron handle riveted behind, the hollow of the boss taking the fighter's fist. Of the iron ring armour, the war-shirt—often mentioned in the poem of Beowulf—distinct traces are not found. Doubtless it was worn only by chiefs, and was too precious to the living to be buried with the dead. When Beowulf prepared for the contest with Grendel, and expressed his last wishes in case of death, it is noticeable that his single bequest was his war-shirt. "Best of battle-shrouds, it is Hrædla's legacy Weland's work," and this was, if its owner fell, a legacy thought worthy of no less a person than his great chief Hygelac, to whom it was to be sent.

With the iron work used by the men are found abundantly in these barrows the ornaments of women in wrought gold, enriched not seldom with coloured enamel, pearl, or sliced garnet; buckles, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, hair-pins, necklaces, and pendent neck-ornaments, besides the knife, scissors, tweezers, tooth-pick, ear-pick, and the frame of the housekeeping purse, all pendent from the lady's girdle. In Mercia and East Anglia the early Anglo-Saxons burnt their dead, as we read that Beowulf was burnt, and they gathered their ashes into coarse hand-made urns of clay. The grave of an Anglo-Saxon chief is often found to contain also the

ornamented iron bands and handles of small buckets, a foot or eight inches, or sometimes only four inches, wide and deep. These probably dipped for, and carried round to the guests in the chief's hall, the ale or mead, or, as we read in "Beowulf," "wine from wondrous vats."

What we thus take from within the barrows heaped over their dead will help to give fresh life to at least a few tones in the voice of song that rose twelve centuries ago from the wide halls of the Anglo-Saxon chieftains, when the clamour of their fighting men was hushed, and cups were filled and hearts were free for exultation over noble ancestry and noble deeds of arms.

Of the two discovered leaves of the saga of Waldhere* —Walter of Aquitaine—in the first, Ælfhere is being reminded of his valour as Ætla's van warrior, and assured of success against Guthhere, whose attack has been unjust; in the second, Guthhere and Waldhere parley before fighting. These are parts of the saga that was paraphrased by Gerald of Fleury in Latin hexameters in the tenth century.

Waldhere.

In this fragment we find the sentiment that "He who trusteth himself to the Holy, to God for aid, he there readily findeth it." But such words, like the few Christian passages in Beowulf, were probably interpolated in a later form of the old song of valour shown in greed and rapine. For the poetry is that of men among whom right was to the strong, and whose religion was faith in an iron destiny. "What is to be goes ever as it must," is the last thought of Beowulf's speech when offering to risk his life for pay in Hrothgar's service; and again he says, "the Must Be often helps an undoomed man when he is brave." The brave deeds are done from no high spiritual motive, but for gold and gifts. It was the suggestive

Paganism.

* "E. W." i. 355.

praise always offered to a prince that he was liberal in giving. For all that he did Beowulf was promised substantial payment, and was substantially paid. Before his adventure at the mere he took thought for his gold, saying, "Send, dear Hrothgar, to Hygelac the gold thou hast given me, that the Goth's lord may know I found a good bestower of rings." And what was done was not done modestly. The coarse insolence of Beowulf's social self-assertion against the Gar Danes who are feasting him, and against Hunferth, whom he also reminds over the ale-cup that he is the murderer of his own brothers, is received as a common part of heroism by all who are concerned. Hrothgar was glad, for he "trusted in help when he heard Beowulf;" and of Hrothgar's queen Wealtheow we are told that "the woman liked the Goth's proud speeches." No chief retained more than he could hold by his own sword; and the poet who sang the valour of his chief, if he would know good days, must not stint of his celebration, or, as befell the lamenting Deor, another came whose song pleased better, and the chief plundered back what he had given to one poet that he might enrich the favourite who had supplanted him.

There is another side from which to note the temper of the Anglo-Saxon mind, yet ignorant of the best truth and honour. If their Pagan theology had not taught our forefathers to labour in this world by self-denial for a happiness beyond the grave, so neither had it taught them to affect a spiritual aim in living selfishly. If the hero fought and the bard sang for food and fee, plainly and honestly they made it appear that they did so. "Let us eat and drink," they said, "for to-morrow we die." The best that their gods promised for them after death was that they should go on eating and drinking. The warrior was undisguisedly a tradesman in his sword, the poet in his song. What each desired he took if he

Christianity. The soil for the seed.

could get it; but his motives were as open as his deeds. The practical mind of the First-English* never throughout their history has worked for any but substantial ends, and what end could it seek in those days but the conquest of material advantage? Theirs was a mind that marched straight towards its purpose, and spoke plainly. It may be said that there is in the unmixed Anglo-Saxon an imagination with deep roots and little flower, solid stem and no luxuriance of foliage. The gay wit of the Celt would pour into the song of a few minutes more phrases of ornament than are to be found in the whole poem of "Beowulf." For example, in the death-song of Queen Meav over her husband Cuchorb,† there are six similes in eight successive lines,

* I have no objection to the word Anglo-Saxon, but I object to the substitution for it of such vague words as Early English and Old English. Early and Old are relative terms; as in ages of life, thirty is old to a child, and early rising does not invariably mean rising with the sun. Anglo-Saxon is definitely English in its first form, and First-English is its definite name. "First-English" and "Transition-English" together constitute "Early English," and in that sense Early English is understood by the Early English Text Society; but the term Early English is most commonly applied to Transition English. In these volumes I use throughout "Anglo-Saxon" and "First-English" as equivalent terms, with a preference for the homely form First-English. Anglo-Saxon, as has been said ("E.W." I. 251), was never a name given to itself by the English people, but it was used from time to time in state papers from the days of Alfred to those of Edward the Confessor. In Kemble's "Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici," Alfred is sometimes *Rex Saxonum*, sometimes *Rex Anglorum*, sometimes *Rex Anglorum et Saxonum*, also *Rex Albionis*, *Rex totius Britanniæ*, *Basileus Anglorum ceterarumque gentium in circuita persistentium*, and three times it is written "Ego Aelfredus Angul- (Angol and Anglo-) Saxonum Rex." The form continued to be used in public documents (having its origin in the nomenclature of Roman ecclesiastics, who held offices of state in England), and in documents of the years 946, 956, and 1013, Anglo-Saxons are expressly distinguished from the Northumbrians or northern English (See Grein in "Anglia," i. 1–5).

† "E. W." I. p. 179.

while in the six thousand three hundred and fifty lines of "Beowulf" only five similes have been discovered, and these are rather natural expressions than added ornaments. A gliding vessel is compared to a bird; Grendel's eyes are compared to fire; his nails to steel; a light in his dwelling is likened to the sun; and the melting of a sword bathed in his blood to the melting of ice. That which it was in the poet's mind to say was realised first and then uttered with a direct earnestness that carried every thought straight home to the apprehension of the listener. "Widsith" conveys the sense of travel through a matter-of-fact compendium of political geography. And not only did the strength of this old poetry consist in its deep realisation by a thoughtful earnest mind of all the incidents described; the very words employed were often realised by practical analysis into that form usually called metaphorical, which is as common in First-English as the use of simile is rare. Thus the rocks of the coast are "the windy land-walls;" the sea is "the water-street," "the whale-road," or "the swan-road;" a ship is a "wave-traverser," or "the floating wood," the "floater foamynecked," or the "sea-wood;" the chief's chair is "the gift-stool;" his retainers are his "hearth-enjoyers;" night is "the shadow-covering of creatures." Such phrases are but loosely defined as metaphors, since it is of the essence of true metaphor that a word should be used aptly in some other than its direct sense, and even in these phrases the First-English poets were still, in their own practical way, putting the plain word for their thought. The very few true metaphors in "Beowulf" are as simple as the similes: there is the boiling flood, and there are sorrow's boilings. We read of a ship's neck, of her bosom, of earth's bosom; its door is the hall's mouth; Grendel's nails are his handspurs; the war-horn sings; the sun is the candle of the firmament, and heaven's gem. We have bonds of thought; burning anger or longing; the

net of treachery; the bite of swords; the flower of the Goth; the embrace of fire or flood, or it is said "fire shall devour;" Grendel's mother is the seawolf; the "word's point breaks through the treasure of the breast;" heroes are "war-beasts," and Hrothgar is "helm of the Scyldings." There are few more examples of true metaphor in the poem; and all but five or six are metaphors so common and natural to human language, that it would have needed more use of imagination to avoid them than to use them for direct expression of a thought.

The people of Holland have retained to our own day, little changed, this type of character. Both Dutch and Anglo-Saxons, when the seed of Christianity struck root among them, mastered the first conditions of a full development of its grand truths with the same solid earnestness, and carried their convictions out to the same practical result. Holland has indeed been, not less than England, with England and for England, a battle-ground of civil and religious liberty. The power of the English character, and therefore of the literature that expresses it, lies in this energetic sense of truth and this firm habit of looking to the end. Christianity having once been accepted, greatly aided as it was in its first establishment among us by the zeal of the Gael and Cymry, who were in this country the first Christians, the First-English writers fastened upon it; and throughout the whole subsequent history of our literature, varied and enlivened by the diverse blending of the Anglo-Saxon with the Northman and the Celt, religious energy has been the centre of its life.

And now we come to the first bringers of the book and bell.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST TEACHERS OF CHRISTIANITY.

CLEMENT, whom Paul names as one who had been a fellow-labourer with him at Philippi,* is, according to Origen,† the same who was afterwards Bishop of Rome. In the third place after the Apostles, says Irenæus in his "Church History," the episcopal office was held by Clement, who also saw the blessed Apostles and lived with them. The same Clement wrote two Epistles to the Corinthians, which were of so much authority in the early Christian Church that they are included in the most ancient MS. text of the Greek Scripture that this country possesses — the Alexandrine Codex, ascribed to the fourth century, given by Cyril Lucar, once Patriarch of Alexandria, to Charles I. in 1629. In the first of these Epistles Clement says, in speaking of St. Paul, "Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipped and stoned; he preached both in the East and in the West, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and having taught the whole world righteousness, and having travelled even to the extreme boundaries of the West, he suffered martyrdom by command of the Prefects." From this mention of travel "to the extreme boundaries of the West," it has been inferred that Paul himself visited Britain: for Britain was in the geography of that day the extreme island of the West; and Josephus makes Agrippa say to the

Christianity. The sowing of the seed. Was Paul in Britain?

* Ep. to Philippians iv. 3. † Comm. on John i. 29.

Jews who sought war with Rome at about the time of St. Paul's martyrdom, "Gades is the limit of the Roman power on the West; nay, indeed, they have sought another habitable earth beyond the ocean, and have carried their arms as far as such British islands as were never known before." A few later expressions still more general than this of Clement, which is itself coupled with the general assertion that Paul "taught the whole world righteousness," are all the evidence to be adduced in support of the theory, upheld by some, that St. Paul was the first who brought the tidings of the Gospel to this island.

The first preachers in Britain.

Tertullian,* arguing in the year 208 that all nations have believed in Christ, says that "those places of Britain inaccessible to the Roman arms are now subdued to Christ." Origen, who died A.D. 253, says in one Homily,† that "the power of our Saviour's kingdom reached as far as Britain, which seemed to lie in another division of the world." And Dorotheus, who is supposed to have been a Presbyter at Tyre or Antioch towards the close of the third century, when he wrote a "Synopsis of the Life and Death of the Prophets and of the Apostles and Disciples of Jesus Christ," says that Aristobulus, one of the seventy disciples, whom Paul names in the Epistle to the Romans, taught the doctrine of salvation, and executed the office of Bishop in Britain. Heleca, Bishop of Cæsar Augustus, in an ancient fragment quoted by Archbishop Ussher,‡ says also that "Britain was renowned for its many martyrs, and chiefly for Aristobulus, one of the seventy-two disciples, who was sent as Bishop to Britain, and martyred in the reign of Nero." Eusebius,§ in the beginning of the fourth century, says that "Christian teachers passed over the ocean to those which are called the British;"

* "Adversus Judæos."
† The 6th on the 1st chapter of Luke.
‡ "Brit. Eccl. Antiq." c. i.
§ "Evangel. Demonst." iii. 7.

and Chrysostom,* towards the close of the same century, says that "the British islands, which lie beyond the sea and are in the very midst of the ocean, have felt the power of the word, for there churches and altars have been erected." Here is, at least, evidence enough of an early preaching of the Gospel in this country.

In support of the belief that Britain was visited by Aristobulus in the lifetime of St. Paul, if not by St. Paul himself, we have the Cymric legend contained in the Triads,† that Bran the Blessed, son of Llyr Lledíath, and father of Caradog (Caractacus), was seven years a prisoner in Rome as hostage for his son, betrayed through the enticement, deceit, and plotting of Cartismandua; and it was Bran who brought to this island from Rome the faith of Christ. The "Genealogy of the Saints of the Isle of Britain" names as the four missionaries who accompanied Bran to Britain, after his release, "Ilid, Cyndav and his son Mawan, men of Israel, and Arwystle Hen (the old), a man of Italy." A farmhouse, called Trevran, in Glamorgan, has been pointed out as the site of Bran's residence, and the neighbouring church of Ilid Llandid is called the oldest church in Britain. Arwystle the old is considered to have been Aristobulus. Caractacus was in Rome A.D. 51, this being, as Tacitus writes, nine years after the war in Britain broke out. The seven years' imprisonment of Bran would bring his release to the year 58—the year when St. Paul, also released, went into Spain. Aristobulus, who is said to have been one of Bran's Christian companions as preachers to his countrymen, legend declares to have been the first Bishop in Britain, and to have died at Glastonbury in A.D. 99. In harmony with these traditions is a theory that the Pudens and Claudia mentioned by St. Paul at the close of his second letter to Timothy ("Eubulus greeteth thee, and

Aristobulus. Bran.

* In lib. "Quod Christus sit Deus, contra Jud. atque Gent."

† Triads, 18, 35.

Pudens and Linus and Claudia, and all the brethren") are the Pudens and Claudia mentioned by Martial,* as a young Roman officer married to a British lady, Claudia Rufina, daughter to Cogidubnus, King of Chichester, at whose court he found shelter after shipwreck. The lady may be supposed to have come to Rome with Pomponia, wife of Aulus Plautius, legate in Britain A.D. 43—52. Pomponia was accused in the year 57 of the taint of foreign superstition; she might, therefore, possibly have shared the faith of Claudia and Pudens, and have been active with them in sending, on the return of Bran in the year 58, a mission into Britain.†

The tradition of King Lucius.

In the very short fourth chapter of his "Ecclesiastical History," Bede, having copied from Orosius a complication of erroneous dates and names to mark the period —"In the year of our Lord's incarnation 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made Emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus"—adds, naming Eleutherus, who was twelfth Bishop at Rome between the years 176 and 190, "In their time, whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, King of the Britons" [who is said to have died A.D. 201] "sent a letter to him entreating that, by his command, he might be made a Christian,

* Lib. iv. ep. 13; Lib. xi. ep. 54.

† The legend of Joseph of Arimathea's coming to Glastonbury, and other traditions of the early British Church, may be read in Archbishop Ussher's "De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ." We shall have to speak of it in connection with the myths of the Arthurian cycle. The arguments against it, with the argument for St. Paul's having visited Britain, and much more on these early questions, are fully given in Jeremy Collier's "Ecclesiastical History." Venantius Fortunatus, in the sixth century, proves an opinion to have been then extant ("Vita St. Martini," lib. iii. carm. 5) that St. Paul came himself to Britain.

"Transit oceanum, vel quâ facit insula portum
Quasque Britannus habet terras, quasque ultima Thule."

and the effect of the pious request soon followed. The Britons kept the faith they had received, in quiet peace, inviolate and whole until the times of Diocletian." To this doubtful King Lucius is, of course, ascribed the foundation of several churches, including St. Martin's at Canterbury, and St. Peter's, Cornhill, or even Westminster Abbey and Winchester Cathedral. Bede further tells that the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian, the tenth since the reign of Nero, was "maintained incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscriptions of the innocent, slaughters of martyrs. At last it exalted Britain with the frequent glory of devout confession of the martyr's faith in God."

The first British martyr is said to have been Alban, taught by Amphibalus, a Christian preacher whom he had sheltered, and in whose place, disguised in the priest's clothes, he gave himself up to the pursuers. Alban was scourged and is said to have been beheaded on the 22nd of June, in the year 305, on the spot where there stands now St. Alban's Abbey. Bede tells with unquestioning faith that on the way to the place of execution—Holmhurst, near the city of Verulam—the bridge over a river being covered by spectators, the water dried up to make way for Alban; that his appointed executioner desired, thereupon, not to slay him, but to die with him; and that when another man struck off the saint's head, together with the head that man's eyes dropped upon the ground.

Alban.

After Diocletian put off the purple, in the year 305, the Church in Britain was left to its own natural development, until in later years it suffered from the influx of the Pagan Anglo-Saxons. In the year 314, Constantine being then Emperor, born in Britain, the son of Constantius by a British mother, three British Bishops—Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and

Councils at Arles and Rimini.

Adelfius, Bishop "de civitate colonia Londinensium"*—subscribed among those present at the first Council of Arles. This is the Constantine of whom it is told by Lactantius, who taught Constantine's eldest son, and by Eusebius, who says Constantine himself declared to him and confirmed it by an oath, that when in 312 he was marching against Maxentius, who ruled in Italy, and praying for success prayed also for certainty as to his faith, he saw in the heavens a bright cross, with the inscription "In Hoc Signo Vince," and being thus and by a corresponding dream converted, took for the symbol on his standards the letters I. H. S., and won the battle of the Milvian Bridge. Zosimus, no Christian, tells that Maxentius had on that day the adverse portent of a flight of owls. The presence of British bishops at the Council of Arles is positive evidence of the existence of a Christian Church in Celtic Britain at the beginning of the fourth century. At the Council of Rimini, in the year 359, the Bishops being lodged and fed at the Emperor's charge, those of Gaul and Britain chose rather to live independently on their own means, except three bishops out of Britain, who were too poor to do so, and would rather be subsisted by the Emperor than feed upon the brethren.†

The Church in Britain, consisting chiefly of native missionary monks and their converts, who occasionally made pilgrimages to Jerusalem or went to Rome, is said to have begun about this time to form itself into choirs or corporations, of which the chief received the name of Ban-gor, or Ban Cor, high choir. One was in

Morgan or Pelagius.

* Supposed by Jeremy Collier to be a misreading of Colony of the 11th Legion—"De Civ. Col. Leg. XI. It has been also guessed to mean Colchester, or Lincoln, or, most likely, Caerleon-on-Usk; York, London, and Caerleon (Isca Silurum) being capitals of provinces into which Roman Britain was divided.

† Sulpicius Severus, "Hist. Sacr.," lib. ii.

Bardsey Isle, founded by Cadvan at the end of the fifth century. One in Flintshire, on the borders of Cheshire, was known as Bangor Iscoed, that is, under the wood; and is said to have grown to such importance that it contained at one time two thousand monks, who lived by their own industry, presided over by an abbot, and with a subordinate ruler over each of their seven sections. To this community the earliest British ecclesiastical writer—Morgan, Latinised Pelagius—is often said to have belonged; but, in fact, Pelagius wrote a hundred years before the Bangor College was, at the beginning of the sixth century, established by Dunod. Morgan, originally Morgant, or Morcant, means in Cymric a sea-brink, or, as a man's name, one born by the sea-shore. This was Latinised, though Greek, into Pelagius by the amiable and learned man who, between the years 394 and 415, was maintaining that which Augustine and the great body of the Church opposed as the Pelagian heresy. It is probable that the British Morgan, or Pelagius, was not otherwise a monk than as men were in his day called monks who led within their own houses stricter lives than their neighbours, studied the Scriptures, and taught others the promises of God. Pelagius travelled to Rome, where, says Augustine, he "lived very long and kept the best company." He saw the sack of Rome by Alaric; and soon afterwards set sail for Carthage, then another great centre of Christian civilisation. From Carthage he travelled into Egypt, and thence to Jerusalem, where he again settled.* He was an old man in the year 404; for he complained of his age when he then published at Rome his commentaries; and being in the East, where probably he died, he wrote letters to Rome from the Council of Diospolis in 415. Several of his works remain among those of Augustine and

* August. "De Gestis Palest.," cap. xxii.; "De Peccat. Orig.," cap. viii. 21; "Contra Pelag.," cap. xxii.

Jerome. One of his letters,* describing to the nun Demetrias Alaric's sack of Rome, will express much of his character.

"*Alaric at Rome.*

"'This dismal calamity,' he says, 'is but just over; and you yourself are a witness how Rome, that commanded the world, was astonished at the alarm of the Gothic trumpet, when that barbarous and victorious nation stormed her walls, and made their way through the breach. Where were then the privileges of birth and the distinctions of quality? Were not all ranks and degrees levelled at that time, and promiscuously huddled together? Every house was then a scene of misery, and equally filled with grief and confusion. The slave and the man of condition were in the same circumstances, and everywhere the terror of death and slaughter was the same; except, we may say, the fright made the greater impression upon those who got the most by living. Now, if flesh and blood has such power over fears, and mortal men can frighten us to this degree, what will become of us when the trumpet sounds from the sky, and the archangel summons us to judgment; when we are not attacked by sword or lance, or by anything so feeble as a human enemy, but when all the terrors of nature, the artillery of heaven, and the militia, as I may so speak, of God Almighty, are let loose upon us?"

What was condemned as the heresy of Pelagius was thus summed up by the church of Carthage, against one of Morgan's disciples, in twelve articles of prosecution:— 1. That Adam was mortal. 2. That the rest of mankind was not being punished for his sin. 3. That the Law had saving promises as well as the Gospel. 4. That there were some men who lived without sin before the coming of our Saviour. 5. That infants are not born wicked or accursed. 6. That Adam's disobedience is not the cause of natural death, nor our Lord's resurrection the reason for our resurrection. 7. That it is conceivable for a man by his own effort to keep God's law and live innocently. 8. That rich men could not be saved by baptism unless they parted

* Inter August., Ep. 149. I quote this through, and take what I have said thus far of Pelagius from the "Eccl. Hist." of Jeremy Collier.

with all their estate. 9. That the assistance or grace of God is not granted specially for every moral act; created powers, divine teaching, and liberty of will being sufficient. 10. That grace is given in proportion to our works. 11. That only those without sin can be called the sons of God. 12. That by our own effort we must overcome temptations.

The opponent of this Cymric teacher was the Saint Augustine of the primitive church, not he who is reputed to have first brought Christianity to Britain. This Augustine was born in Numidia, A.D. 354, the son of a Pagan father, and of Monica, a Christian mother, and he says in his "Confessions" (vii. 9), that by the books of the Platonists he was, after many doubts, at last prepared for an appreciation of the sacred Scriptures. His piety was ardent. He sold his family estates, and distributed to the poor all that he had beyond the means of a simple maintenance. The sack of Rome by Alaric (A. D. 410), which occurred while he was in Africa, and which led Pagan philosophers to reproach Christianity with having failed in bettering the world, caused Augustine to write his best work, "De Civitate Dei." Not long afterwards he became the great antagonist of the Pelagians; but here, and in all his numerous controversies with the Manichæans, Donatists, &c., there was joined to the earnestness of profound conviction that Christian candour towards those he opposed of which we have seen examples in his concession of honour to the private character of Morgan or Pelagius. Augustine's mind had passed through many changes to its point of strong antagonism against the doctrines of the Cymric writer. Tracing everything to divine grace, he now, says Dr. Neander,* "sought for the attainment of faith a founda-

* "History of Christian Dogmas," translated by Mr. J. E. Ryland, in 2 vols of Bohn's Standard Library.

tion in the secret absolute decrees of God, according to which one was chosen and another not." In a work written A. D. 397, he derived all good in man from divine agency, and said, "God, out of compassion, chooses some to whom He imparts divine grace, *gratia efficax*, which operates upon them in an irresistible manner; but yet in accordance with their rational nature, so that they cannot do otherwise than follow it. The rest he leaves to their merited perdition." "The Christian faith," said Augustine again, "properly consists in what relates to two men; one by whom we are sold under sin, the other by whom we are redeemed from our sins." Morgan, on the other hand, whose doctrines I cannot describe more fairly than in the dispassionate words of a modern writer who dissents from them,*

"Regarded the creature as endowed with the powers of its existence and left to itself; hence the moral nature has likewise its powers, in order to fulfil its destiny; these faculties belong to it as an inalienable possession, and can suffer no essential alteration. It depends on man himself to make use of these powers. In reference to Goodness, Pelagius distinguished a *posse*, a *velle*, and an *esse*. The *posse* comes from God; the *velle* and the *esse* are man's affair. That the eye can see is a gift of God; to see ill or well depends on ourselves. Thus, God has imparted to us the ability for goodness; whether we perform it depends upon ourselves. Accordingly, the essence of virtue consists in the free application of our moral powers—in this lies the *meritum* of man, without which there is no virtue. With this also is connected the definition of Free Will—the ability, at every moment, of doing good or evil. . . . Augustine ascribed great importance to the first sin, as an act by which man's pure moral nature was separated from communion with God. Pelagius, on the contrary, lowered the moral importance of the first sin; he could not imagine that this single act could exert so great an influence on the development of the human race. . . . . According to the Pelagian representation, the consequences of the first sin were rendered less important for Adam himself, because he was awakened to repentance by the punishment. The Free Will remained in him as in his posterity, equipoised between Good and Evil; death was regarded by Pelagius as founded in human nature as such. He

* Neander's "Christian Dogmas," ed. cit. pp. 360-363.

was willing, indeed, to grant that the first man, if he had not sinned, might have been spared from suffering it by a special privilege, but in itself it was the law of his nature. And not the less were the maladies of human nature founded on it, and could not be attributed to Adam's transgression. On the other hand, Augustine taught that death had its origin in the discord which arose through sin between man and God, and in its consequences in human nature. Guilt and the punishment of sin, with all other evils, has passed over to the whole development of humanity. In Adam the whole human race sinned and became estranged from God, a *massa perditionis*."

The extant writings of this most ancient Cymric theologian are "Commentaries upon Paul's Epistles;" a "Libellus Fidei ad Innocentem I.," preserved among the works of Jerome; his letter offering to Demetrias the nun the model of ascetic life; and fragments from his writings upon "Nature and Free Will," preserved among the works of St. Augustine.

Germanus.

Although Morgan himself was in the East, his doctrine spread among the British Christians, and a mission was sent from Gaul, of two bishops, Germanus of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes, who reached Britain in the year 429, and preached, not only in churches but in fields and highways, against the Pelagian doctrines. A public disputation was also held at Verulam, where, says Bede, "the people gave sentence in their acclamations, shouted for Germanus and Lupus, and could scarce command their temper so far as to forbear beating the Pelagians." The bishops from Gaul remained, and are said to have enabled the converted Britons to put to the rout at Mold, about ten miles from Chester, an army of attacking Saxons and Picts, by the loud shout of Hallelujah from an ambush among echoing rocks. After the return of the French bishops to France, Pelagianism spread again, and Germanus, now accompanied by a bishop named Severus, returned for a time to Britain.

Palladius, probably born in the south of Gaul, also combated the heresies of the Pelagians, and was an archdeacon sent to Ireland by Pope Celestine when Lupus and Germanus came to Britain. He landed with his fellow-missionaries near the town of Wicklow, but had little success. He is said, however, to have founded three churches—Tech na Roman, which may be at Tigroney in the county of Wicklow; Domnach Arda, which may be at Donard in the same county; and Cell Finé, which may be at Killeen Cormac, where funeral stones and inscriptions have been found. After a few months Palladius gave up his enterprise. He returned to Britain, and died at Fordun not long afterwards. The work begun by Palladius was so promptly followed up by Patricius that some have believed Palladius and Patricius to be two names for one person.*

Palladius.

The birth of Patrick, Apostle and Saint of Ireland, has been generally placed in the latter half of the fourth century; and he is said to have died at the age of a hundred and twenty. As he died in the year 493—and we may admit that he was then a very old man—if we may say that he reached the age of eighty-eight, we place his birth in the year 405. We may reasonably believe, therefore, that he was born in the early part of the fifth century. His birthplace, now known as Kilpatrick, was at the junction of the Levin with the Clyde, in what is now the county of Dumbarton. His baptismal name was Succath. His father was Calphurnius, a deacon, son of Potitus, who was a priest. His mother's name was Conchessa,

St. Patrick.

* An excellent view of the sources of knowledge on the subject of St. Patrick, and of the present state of criticism upon questions in which he is concerned, will be found in a Thesis read and defended in November, 1883, by a candidate for the degree of Bachelor of Theology in the Académie de Paris: "Étude Critique sur la Vie et l'Œuvre de St. Patrick, par Benjamin Roberts (Paris, 1883)."

whose family may have belonged to Gaul, and who may thus have been, as it is said she was, of the kindred of St. Martin of Tours; for there is a tradition that she was with Calphurnius as a slave before he married her. Since Eusebius spoke of three bishops from Britain at the Council of Arles, Succath, known afterwards in missionary life by his name in religion, Patricius (*pater civium*), might very reasonably be a deacon's son.

In his early years Succath was at home by the Clyde, and he speaks of himself as not having been obedient to the teaching of the clergy. When he was sixteen years old he, with two of his sisters and other of his countrymen, was seized by a band of Irish pirates that made descent on the shore of the Clyde and carried him off to slavery. His sisters were taken to another part of the island, and he was sold to Milcon MacCuboin in the north, whom he served for six or seven years, so learning to speak the language of the country, while keeping his master's sheep by the Mountain of Slieve Miss. Thoughts of home and of its Christian life made the youth feel the heathenism that was about him; his exile seemed to him a punishment for boyish indifference; and during the years when young enthusiasm looks out upon life with new sense of a man's power—growing for man's work that is to do—Succath became filled with religious zeal.

Three Latin pieces are ascribed to St. Patrick: a "Confession," which is in the Book of Armagh, and in three other manuscripts;* a letter to Corolicus, and a few "Dicta Patricii," which are also in the Book of Armagh.†

* Cotton MSS., Nero, E.; Codex Salisburiensis; and a MS. in the Monastery of St. Vaast.

† The Book of Armagh, preserved at Trinity College, Dublin, contains a Life of St. Patrick, with his writings, and consists in chief part of a description of all the books of the New Testament, including the Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans. Traces found here and there of

There is no strong reason for questioning the authenticity of the "Confession," which is in unpolished Latin, the writer calling himself "indoctus, rusticissimus, imperitus," and it is full of a deep religious feeling. It is concerned rather with the inner than the outer life, but includes references to the early days of trial by which Succath's whole heart was turned to God. He says, "After I came into Ireland I pastured sheep daily, and prayed many times a day. The love and fear of God, and faith and spirit, wrought in me more and more, so that in one day I reached to a hundred prayers, and in the night almost as many, and stayed in the woods and on the mountains, and was urged to prayer before the dawn, in snow, in frost, in rain, and took no harm, nor, I think, was there any sloth in me. And there one night I heard a voice in a dream saying to me, 'Thou hast well fasted; thou shalt go back soon to thine own land;' and again after a little while, 'Behold! thy ship is ready.'" In all this there is the passionate longing of an ardent mind for home and Heaven.

At the age of twenty-two Succath fled from his slavery to a vessel of which the master first refused and finally consented to take him on board. He and the sailors were then cast by a storm upon a desert shore of Britain, possibly upon some region laid waste by ravages from over sea. Having at last made his way back, by a sea passage, to his home on the Clyde, Succath was after a time captured again, but remained captive only for two months, and went back home. Then the zeal for his Master's service made him feel like the Seafarer in the Anglo-Saxon poem; and all the traditions of his home would have accorded with the rise of the resolve to cross the sea, and to spread Christ's teaching in what had been the land of his captivity.

the name of the copyist and of the archbishop for whom the copy was made, fix its date almost to a year as 807 or 811–812.

There were already centres of Christian work in Ireland, where devoted men were labouring and drew a few into their fellowship. Succath aimed at the gathering of all these scattered forces, by a movement that should carry with it the whole people. He first prepared himself by giving about four years to study of the Scriptures at Auxerre, under Germanus, and then went to Rome, under the conduct of a priest, Segitius, and probably with letters from Germanus to Pope Celestine. He sought consecration for a mission to Ireland like that on which the Pope had just sent Palladius. The mission of Palladius interfering with his wish, Succath left Rome, passed through North Italy and Gaul, till he met on his way two followers of Palladius, Augustinus and Benedictus, who told him of their master's failure, and of his death at Fordun. Succath then obtained consecration from Amathus, a neighbouring bishop, and as Patricius, went straight to Ireland. He landed near the town of Wicklow, by the estuary of the River Varty, which had been the landing-place of Palladius. In that region he was, like Palladius, opposed; but he made some conversions, and advanced with his work northward that he might reach the home of his old master, Milcon, and pay him the purchase-money of his stolen freedom. But Milcon, it is said, burnt himself and his goods rather than bear the shame of submission to the growing power of his former slave.

Patrick addressed the ruling classes, who could bring with them their followers, and he joined tact with his zeal; respecting ancient prejudices, opposing nothing that was not directly hostile to the spirit of Christianity, and handling skilfully the chiefs with whom he had to deal. An early convert—Dichu MacTrighim—was a chief with influential connections, who gave the ground for the religious house now known as Saul. This chief satisfied so well the inquiries of Laeghaire, son of Niall, King of Erin, concerning

the stranger's movements, that Patrick took ship for the mouth of the Boyne, and made his way straight to the king himself. The result of his energy was that he met successfully all opposition of those who were concerned in the maintenance of old heathen worship, and brought King Laeghaire to his side.

Then Laeghaire resolved that the old laws of the country as established by the judges, whose order was named Brehon, should be revised, and brought into accord with the new teaching. So the Brehon laws of Ireland were revised, with Patrick's assistance, and there were no ancient customs broken or altered, except those that could not be harmonised with Christian teaching. The good sense of Patrick enabled this great work to be done without offence to the people. The collection of laws thus made by the chief lawyers of the time, with the assistance of Patrick, is known as the "Senchus Mor," and, says an old poem—

> "Laeghaire, Core Dairi, the brave;
> Patrick, Benen, Cairnech, the just;
> Rossa, Dubtach, Fergus, the wise;
> These are the nine pillars of the Senchus Mor."

This body of laws, traditions, and treatises on law is found in no manuscript of a date earlier than the fourteenth century. It includes, therefore, much that is of later date than the fifth century.

Patrick's greatest energies are said to have been put forth in Ulster and Leinster. Among the churches or religious communities founded by him in Ulster was that of Armagh. If he was born about the year 405, when he was carried to Ireland as a prisoner at the age of sixteen the date would have been 421. His age would have been twenty-two when he escaped, after six or seven years of captivity, and the date 427. A year at home, and four years with Germanus at Auxerre, would bring him to the age of

twenty-seven, and the year 432, when he began his great endeavour to put Christianity into the main body of the Irish people. That work filled all the rest of his life, which was long. If we accept the statement, in which all the old records agree, that the time of Patrick's labour in Ireland was not less than sixty years; sixty years bring him to the age of eighty-eight in the year 493. And in that year he died.

The "Letter to Corolicus," ascribed to St. Patrick, is addressed to a petty king of Brittany who persecuted Christians, and was meant for the encouragement of Christian soldiers who served under him. It may, probably, be regarded as authentic. The mass of legend woven into the life of the great missionary lies outside this piece and the "Confession." The "Confession" only expresses heights and depths of religious feeling haunted by impressions and dreams, through which, to the fervid nature out of which they sprang, heaven seemed to speak. St. Patrick did not attack heresies among the Christians; he preached to those who were not Christians the Christian faith and practice. His great influence was not that of a writer, but of a speaker. He must have been an orator, profoundly earnest, who could put his soul into his voice; and, when his words bred deeds, conquered all difficulties in the way of action with right feeling and good sense.

Strength was now added to the small communities of teachers in Erin and on the opposite coasts and islands of Alban. Small communities of Christian missionaries called Culdees—either as *cultores Dei*, worshippers of God, or, according to the Gaelic, Keila Dia, servants of God, or Keledi, inhabitants of the religious Kil, cell or retreat—supplied from an early time some of the most earnest and laborious diffusers of religious truth. Ninian built his church at Whithern, on the coast of Galloway, in the year of the death of St. Martin

The Culdees.

Ninian.

of Tours, A.D. 397. He also sought to Christianise the Southern Picts in the north-east of Scotland, men of whom Gildas said that before their conversion they had "more hair on their faces than clothes on their bodies." After eight years' labour, driven, A.D. 420, to Erin by their violence, Ninian is said to have built a monastery at Clonconnor before returning to his Picts. In southern Erin Alba and Declan had, it is said, founded a religious house at Ardmore, near Waterford, and Kiaran another at Sierkeran, or Saigre, in King's County.

The seat of the primacy of the old British Church was at St. David's, formerly Menevia, whither the David—Dewi —who is called Apostle of the Welsh, an austere and able priest of the school of the Egyptian monks, had, early in the sixth century, removed from Caerleon the seat of the archbishopric, upon his own appointment to that mission by the Synod of Brovi. Dewi —whose name rises into David and sinks into Taffy—was the son of Sandde the son of Caredig, a king who gave his name to Caredigion, Cardigan. He was born at Meneu, (which means the bush, and is Latinised Menevia). He was bred in the school of St. Illtyd, an Armorican, who is said to have been one of King Arthur's soldiers, and who began to teach Christianity in a church founded by him in the year 520. David studied afterwards in the school of Paulinus. Geoffrey of Monmouth says that Dewi, Archbishop of Caerleon, died in the monastery he had founded in Menevia, where he was honourably buried by Maelgwm Gwynedd. Maelgwm died in the year 566. Archbishop Ussher says that St. David died in 554, aged eighty-two, but there is some reason for dating his death a little later. At the time of his death Dewi was busy in the Scriptorium of his monastery upon a copy of the Gospel of St. John in letters of gold. Diffusion of the scriptures was a part of the work of conversion, and David took part in the work of copyists.

Saint David.

The Irish Church retained its chief position after Patrick's death. In the year 563, Columba, an Irish abbot of royal descent, after founding monasteries in the north of Ireland, passed with twelve companions into Scotland, at the age of about forty-two. He had been born at Gartan, in the county of Donegal, about the year 521. For thirty-four years from the time of his coming to Scotland he laboured as a missionary on the mainland and in the Hebrides, where his chief residence was in the island of Hy—Iona—called from him I (or Hy) columbkille. The island was given to him by the Scottish King Conall; it was within reach both of the Scots who had accepted Christianity and of the Picts who had not. Columba made it first a main object to bring the Picts to faith in Christ. He visited the Pictish chief in his fortress, won his favour, and obtained from him confirmation of the grant of the island of Hy, which either Pict or Scot of the mainland might consider to be in his gift. Iona then became the head-quarters of a great society, which had monasteries in Scotland and Ireland; and which differed in several respects, as, indeed, the whole British Church differed, in points of discipline from the Church of Rome; the Church of Ancient Britain being upon some points in noticeable harmony with Christian churches of the East. Columba was a fighting saint. There is an unusually trustworthy life of him by Adamnan, from which we may infer that he left Ireland, by his own resolve, because he had been a cause of battles. Even when he had been twenty-four years in Iona the hot blood still worked in him, and he was again engaged in battle. But in the spiritual battle he was energetic in his way. Thirty-seven churches in Ireland, including Kells, thirty-two among the Scots, and twenty-one among the Picts, including Dunkeld, are said to have been founded by him. He died in the year 596 or 597.

Columba.

It was a priest of Leinster, Columban, who, six and twenty years after the settlement of Columba in Alban, settled and taught in Burgundy, where he disputed upon points of discipline with Popes of Rome, and set above the Church of Rome that of Jerusalem. Turned out of Burgundy by Theodoric II., after twenty years of residence there, Columban went through Switzerland to Italy, and one of his Gaelic followers, who had been his pupil from boyhood, being compelled by illness to remain behind in Switzerland, founded, in 614, the monastery which bears his name of Gall.

Columban.

Gall.

Another saint of our north country was Kentigern, called by his people Mungho—dearly beloved—known therefore as Saint Mungo. He was born at Culross in some year between 518 and 530, and died probably in the year 603. He is said to have been the founder of churches both in Scotland and the north of England, including Crosthwaite in Cumberland; and at the age of twenty-five founded a church at Glasgow, where he became the first bishop. About ten years later his activity in building churches and overturning images caused him to be driven out by a new king, and he was then in Wales between the years 553 and 573. He was, however, called to Glasgow, where he worked for eight more years, and converted the Picts of Galloway. He is said to have made within the last thirteen years of his life seven visits to Rome.

Kentigern.

The forming of monasteries in these early times meant only the gathering together of persons who devoted their lives to the service of God. From the first there were bishops, priests, and deacons in the Christian Church. As the churches grew, inferior offices were established for efficiency of service, and after a time the word priest was applied to clerks not yet in holy orders; the ordained priest who performed the higher offices of the

The first Monasteries.

Church being then distinguished as the mass priest. The first monks were devotees, of any class or either sex, who wished to separate themselves from the corruptions of the world, and sought in the desert close communion with God. Monachos—monk—meant one living alone; monastes was a solitary; monasterion, monastery, the home of the solitary. The Greek name indicated the relation of this movement to the Eastern Church. The first monks were the Egyptians Anthony and Pachomius, who withdrew into the desert of the Thebais. Many, following their example, retired to the same desert, or otherwise secluded themselves. Such a solitary was called monk, as living alone; anchorite (anachoretes), as having separated himself from the world; hermit, as living in the desert—eremos. A very devout solitary soon had followers of his example gathering about him, and the monastery which was at first only the abode of one became a collection of simple abodes clustering about the cell of any one holy man, sought by the others as a guide, and called their Abbas, or Father. This movement began in the East and spread to the West, carrying with it forms and usages that belonged rather to the Eastern than the Western Church.

Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, that they might have among them ministers of worship, admitted some of these early monks to holy orders. But Eusebius, Bishop of Vercelli, by requiring that the clergy of his church should live in common, devoting themselves at all hours to God, as the monks did, first caused the name of monastery to be associated with a community of clergy. That example was followed, and the word Monastery then meant, for a long time, either a body of devout men or women; or men and women gathered in Christian fellowship about some spiritual guide, and giving their whole time to religious contemplation and spread of the faith in Christ; or a body of clergy that had joined monastic rule to the performance of Church

services. Churches or monasteries founded by such men as those of whom we have been speaking were gatherings of zealous worshippers about the founder himself, or about one or more disciples of his, priests, left for their guidance.

Pope Gregory the First—the Great—still further developed the monastic system in his endeavours for the strengthening of spiritual life among the clergy. He maintained out of his own patrimony six families of monks in Sicily, and gave the rest of his fortune to endowment of the great monastery of St. Andrew's in Rome.

It is quite possible that in Britain the successes of the heathen Anglo-Saxons caused many of the discomfited Cymry to turn from the preaching of the monks, and led to that partial revival of the paganism of the Cymry which is described as Neo-Druidism. It has even been suggested that Stonehenge, of which the stones, mortised and tenoned into one another, are so arranged as to indicate the sun's amplitude at the summer solstice and the elevation of the north pole, may, as well as the similar stones in Brittany, be a form of structure raised upon Teutonic prompting—fifth-century monuments of a modified heathenism.*

Neo-Druidism.

When the Anglo-Saxons were established firmly in the plains, Britain again was regarded as a heathen country. In the year 596, four years after his accession to the bishopric of Rome, Gregory I. sent into this country the mission of that Italian Augustine who is known as the apostle of the Saxons, and the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Augustine and his companions landed in the following year on the isle of Thanet, which was assigned to the missionaries by King Ethelbert, the king having been influenced in their favour through his Christian Frankish

Augustine.

* See on this subject the Hon. Algernon Herbert's "Cyclops Christianus" (London, 1849).

wife. By the end of the year Augustine had baptised ten thousand persons. He was then consecrated, at Arles, Archbishop of the Anglo-Saxons, and he fixed his see at Canterbury, where he died in the year 604. Heathen temples were by Augustine's action on the policy of Gregory converted into Christian churches; heathen festivals and customs were also transformed into Christian holydays. The Cathedral church at Canterbury was founded on the site of a pagan Roman temple; so was old St. Paul's; and so was Westminster Abbey. But Augustine—regarding as an essential part of Christianity the Roman Church's time of holding Easter, the Roman view of the rebaptism of heretics, the Roman forms of ordination, marriage service, tonsure, and other Roman ceremonials, differing from those usual among the Christians of the Cymry and of the Gael—laboured to override the consciences of those who should have been his native fellow-workers. The Cymric clergy, whose chief centre of life was the monastery of Bangor Argoed, in which a rule was maintained resembling that of the monks in the Thebais of Egypt and other parts of the East, were told by Augustine that "in case they would not join in unity with their brethren they should be warred upon by their enemies; if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should at their hands undergo the vengeance of death."* A few years afterwards Ethelfrith, the Saxon king of Northumberland, having advanced his army against the Cymry to the neighbourhood of this Bangor, observed the unarmed priests praying apart for their nation, and caused them to be first attacked and massacred. Twelve hundred are said to have fallen, and it was after this event that the community of British priests was removed to the present Bangor in Caernarvonshire.

It was at about this time that the Christian poet

* Bede, "Eccl. Hist." lib. ii. cap. 2.

Cædmon, who has so often been called the Anglo-Saxon Milton, was born in the same region to which we have seen the old heroic song of Beowulf traced.

The Church in Northumbria. Paulinus.

It is said by Nennius that the conversion of King Edwin and his subjects in Northumbria, in the year 627, was achieved by Rum, the son of Urien. Urien had been murdered in Lindisfarne not quite fifty years before, and might well have left behind him a young son who embraced Christianity, and went, as others went, to Rome, where he studied, received as a priest the name of Paulinus, and was one of the most fit men to be sent back as a missionary to the Cymry. He was sent from Italy by Gregory in the year 601, and at first probably aided Augustine in Kent. In 617 Ethelfrith, the murderer of the monks of Bangor, was himself killed in battle, and then Edwin became king. Eight years afterwards the pagan Edwin sought in second marriage the Christian Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, the king of Kent, who had been converted by Augustine. In pressing his suit Edwin promised not only freedom of Christian worship to her, but that he would himself listen to the arguments for Christianity. Paulinus went with Ethelburga as a missionary to the North, and was consecrated bishop of the Northumbrians. Edwin, fortunate and victorious, and encouraged by the missionary to believe that Christianity provided him with his successes, listened in council to the preacher. Coifi, a chief priest of the old religion, declared for the new. The old was without virtue; for, he argued to the king, "not one of your people has worshipped our gods more diligently than I, yet many are more prosperous in all their undertakings." Then stood up an old earl, who is reported to have said—

"The life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison with that which is hidden from us, to be like the sparrow, who, in the winter time, as you sit in your hall with your thanes and attendants, warmed

with the fire that is lighted in the midst, rapidly flies through, to seek shelter from the chilling storms of rain and snow without. As he flies through, entering by one door and passing out by another, he has a brief escape from the storm and enjoys a momentary calm. Again he goes forth to another winter, and vanishes from your sight. So also seems the short life of man. Of what went before it, or of what is to follow, we know not. If, therefore, this new doctrine bring us something more certain, in my mind it is worthy of adoption."

The end of the argument was that Coifi himself hurled a lance at the idol he had worshipped. Godmundham, near Market Weighton, was the scene of this event, and Edwin and his people were baptised at York. The men of Deivyr and Bryneich (Deira and Bernicia) were now being baptised in crowds, and the battle-ground of Cattraeth, Catterick, was one of the bishop's customary places for the baptism of his converts in the Swale. But in the year 633 the Cymry of Strathclyde, under Cadwal and Penda, attacked the Saxons, and in a great battle at Haethfelth, or Hatfield Chace, they killed the King Edwin, whose kingdom extended so far into the north that some derive from him the name of Edinburgh, which is believed to appear for the first time in any extant record under the date 637. Paulinus had attributed the king's worldly successes to acceptance of the gospel; the defeat, therefore, of Edwin was received by his easily converted people as clear evidence against Christianity. Queen Ethelburga, with Paulinus and the missionaries, fled from among them, leaving only near Catterick a tuneful deacon, James, still diligent in singing, preaching, and baptising.

In the year following the flight of Paulinus the Christian Oswald became King of the Northumbrian Angles, and sent for missionaries to the Culdees of Iona. Corman was sent, who returned to Iona with a hopeless account of the rugged men of Bryneich; but Aidan took his place, and settling in Lindisfarne, to which his labours

The Culdees. Aidan.

and those of the priests who followed him gave its new name of Holy Isle, he distributed his substance to the poor, fasted two days a week, and, travelling on foot among the people of his diocese, won their hearts by his simple truth and self-denying earnestness. More Culdees came through Lindisfarne into Northumbria; and for the next thirty years the Celts were, in this great region, spiritual teachers of the Saxon—teaching, preaching, and monastery building.

It was out of the midst of this great North of England movement, in the newly-established monastery of Whitby, that the Saxon heart sang through the verse of Cædmon its first great hymn, based on the Bible.

Cædmon.

CHAPTER IV.

CÆDMON.

"FOR us it is very right that we praise with our words, love in minds, the Keeper of the Heavens, Glory-King of Hosts. He is the source of power, the head of all His great creation, Lord Almighty. He never had beginning, nor was made, nor cometh any end to the Eternal Lord; but His power is everlasting over heavenly thrones. With high majesty, faithful and strong, He ruled the depths of the firmament that were set wide and far for the children of glory, the guardians of souls." Such is the earliest note of English song, if "Beowulf" and the other ancient poems of its class were brought hither by the First-English from their former home; for this is the opening of Cædmon's sacred poem; and in the latent spirit of this will be found the soul of nearly all that is Saxon in our literature.

The soul of English Literature.

Of the history of Cædmon and his work we know nothing except from Bede, who in two successive chapters* tells first of the life and death of the Abbess Hilda of Whitby, and then of Cædmon, whose great sacred poem was produced at Whitby in her time. Of the Whitby monastery itself this was the origin. Penda, the fierce heathen King of the Mercians, having been defeated and slain at Winwidfield, near Leeds (A.D. 655) by King Oswy, the brother and successor of King Oswald, Oswy gave

Hilda at Whitby.

* "Hist. Eccl." lib. iv. cap. 23, 24.

his daughter, Elfleda, then but a year old, to be consecrated to God's service as a nun. He gave also twelve pieces of land, six among the men of Deivyr, and six among the men of Bryneich, as the sites of monasteries. His consecrated child was placed in the monastery called Herut-ea (Hartlepool)—for still the tale of our early literature haunts the neighbourhood of the presumed English Heorot—where the Abbess Hilda then presided. The measure of land for one of these monasteries was the same as that for a township, namely, a possession of ten families. Two years afterwards, having acquired a site some thirty miles to the south, on the other side of the Tees, at Streoneshalh (so called from a beacon that stood on the cliff), now Whitby, Hilda built there a monastery, to which she and her company removed; and here Elfleda was first a learner, afterwards, as Hilda's successor in the post of abbess, a teacher, until her own death at the age of sixty. This dedicated princess, therefore, was in the monastery when Cædmon there composed his "Paraphrase." In the same monastery, King Oswy, his queen Eanfleda, and Eanfleda's father Edwin, besides many other noble persons, were all buried in the chapel dedicated to St. Peter. This monastery—dedicated, indeed, to St. Peter, but long called St. Hilda's—set near the brow of the high sea-cliff at Streoneshalh,* where Esk, in the deep valley below, threads through a wooded vale its way into the bright broad sea, was the acknowledged centre of religious energy for the region corresponding to our modern counties of Durham, Northumberland, and Yorkshire. It was here that in Hilda's time the synod was held (A.D. 664) for settlement of dispute between the teachers of the Celtic or Culdee and those of the Roman Church as to

* The present abbey ruins are those of additions to a later structure built upon the site of the old Saxon monastery. The original building was destroyed by the Danes in 867, and refounded twice after the Conquest.

the time for celebrating Easter, at which synod the Roman custom was adopted against the counsel of Iona-taught Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and Abbess Hilda.

Hilda was the daughter of Hereric, a nephew of King Edwin. She was one of those who had been converted by the preaching of Paulinus, and did not revert to heathendom. When the Roman missionaries fled she joined her sister at the monastery of Chelles, twelve miles from Paris. Recalled by Bishop Aidan, she received for the monastic use of herself and very few companions the land of one family on the north side of the river Wear. After spending a year there she became Abbess of Herut-ea, founded not long before by Heia, the first Northumbrian nun, who was then changing her abode. At Herut-ea, Hilda—who was much trusted, visited, and counselled by Aidan and other chief teachers among the Celtic Christians—governed for some years. She then built the religious house of Streoneshalh, where they who lived with her shared the goods of this world in common, where all who knew her called her Mother, and whither kings went to get counsel from her wisdom. Whoever studied under her direction was obliged to attend so much to the reading of the Scriptures that many worthy servants of the Church and five bishops are recorded to have come out of her monastery. Afflicted by sickness for the last six years of her life, Hilda never failed in any of her duties; and her last words to her community—in which men and women were not yet parted into the separate houses of the monks and nuns—were of admonition that they should preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves and with all others. The memory of the Lady Hilda remained sweet for more than a thousand years among the traditions of the poor about the place that was her home. Towards the close of the last century, a historian*

* "The History of Whitby and of Whitby Abbey," by Lionel

of Whitby told that in his day when, at ten or eleven o'clock, on a summer forenoon, the sunbeams fall, among the present abbey ruins, in the inside of the northern part of the choir, "'tis then that the spectators who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey, past the north of Whitby Church, imagine they perceive in one of the highest windows there the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though," says the local historian, "we are certain that this is only a reflection, caused by the splendour of the sun's beams, yet report says, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in her glorified state." And so she who among an untaught people diffused with the light of the Gospel the warmth of its charity, still when the flowers bloom by the hard wayside, and the bird sings on the thorn, appears to the half-taught a vision of sunshine in the old place of her toil.

Hilda founded the Whitby monastery in the year 657, and died there in the year 680; then reigned in her stead the Princess Elfleda, trained under her care.

It was at Whitby Monastery, in Hilda's time, that apparently the earliest attempt was made to diffuse orally in popular verse, that could be easily remembered and passed from neighbour to neighbour, from parent to child, that knowledge of Scripture which the good abbess required all students under her charge to attain by study of the written Word. Before there were books, and almost before there were manuscripts in England, it was only through the ear that the half-pagan masses could be taught. At a later period we shall find early religious teachers of the Normans enforcing Scripture history upon

Cædmon.

Charlton (York, 1779). The tradition is also the subject of some doggrel lines given in Grose's "Antiquities."

the minds of their rude congregations by visibly acting its chief incidents within their churches, interspersing them with broad effects for popular enjoyment. We shall find also the Anglo-Saxons, after the Conquest, entering with zest into this way of instruction; but in Hilda's time, and long after it, attainment of the same object was sought more directly. Far from the simple Anglo-Saxon mind, and very far from the woman's mind of Hilda, was any blending of buffoonery with the essentials of Scripture. And throughout, in greater and in smaller writings, we shall presently find that it was mainly upon the living essentials, a true sublimity in the conception of God's infinite mercy and power, joined to a reverent and perfect faith in Him—upon all, in fact, that was practical in religious teaching—that the religious literature of the First-English fastened. Diffusion of the Sacred History was sought, therefore, in Hilda's time at Whitby, not by the miracle-play—a form of literature then unconceived in England—but by a deeply-earnest paraphrase into the native form of verse that had been long associated with heroic legends orally preserved and with all metrical traditions of the people. The peculiar constitution of verse, whatever its form, tends, by rhythm and the repetition of certain letters and sounds, both to assure verbal accuracy in tradition and to aid the memory. The short lines and the close alliterative system of the Anglo-Saxon metre supplied much technical aid to the memory; for, a couplet having been once properly begun, the initial letter of the second and third chief word in it was usually told by the first as a guide to their right recollection. By this verse of oral traditions, then—the verse, also, to which all tunes and instruments of the Anglo-Saxon song were adapted—it was one of the cares of Abbess Hilda to scatter knowledge of the Scriptures broadcast among the men of Deivyr, Bryneich, and all the surrounding regions.

A poet was among the Christian converts, who became

"a brother in her monastery specially distinguished by divine grace; for he used to make songs apt to religion and piety; so that whatever he learnt through interpreters of Holy Writ, this he, after a little while, in poetical words, composed with the utmost sweetness and feeling, would produce in his own tongue, namely, that of the Angles. By whose songs often the minds of many were made to glow with contempt of earthly and desire for heavenly things." So writes Bede; by whom we are told that this man, who was named Cædmon, did not enter the monastery until of mature age. The tale of his reception, read as it stands, is perhaps only a misreading of the natural into the supernatural. A marvel may, indeed, have been feigned to give the Scripture paraphrase weight with the people. Pious frauds were accordant with the civilisation of a time which thought it no sin to mislead heathen opinion in small or even great things, when it appeared that so, with hurt to none, men sitting in darkness might be brought more readily into the way of everlasting truth. There are few in any Church whom any plea would now so blind that they could think of stepping Godward on a lie. But of good Christians who sacrificed themselves to their work in the far past, let us not forget that when they did feign miracles (and here there was a miracle believed rather than feigned), they who feigned were also of the world in which they laboured, eager to stir with a new life rude masses of people steeped in superstition; for whom marvels were invented by their heathen teachers, and who, knowing as yet nothing of the ways of God in nature, saw the supernatural in every sight, sound, or incident that raised their wonder. The Abbess Hilda, in the seventh century, found a homely native poet of rare genius among her converts. He was a poet, with vague yearnings that made songs of "the gift-stool" and "the war-beast" poor in his esteem, seeking he knew not what voice, pained with a

sense of the sealed fountain within him, until the teaching of the Christian missionaries stirred his soul, and at last, with strange emotion, his sense of God rose as sublime music to his lips.

"He was of secular habit," Bede tells us, "until of mature age, and had never learnt any poem. Sometimes, therefore, at a feast, when, for the sake of pleasure, all should sing in their turn, he, when he saw the harp coming near him, rose from table, and went home. Once, when he did that, and, having left the house of festivity, went out to the stables of the beasts,* whose custody was on that night entrusted to him" (a statement from which has arisen, partly through King Alfred's translation of the passage, the common habit of assuming that he was a cow-herd), "and there, when at the usual hour he yielded to sleep, one stood by him, saluting him, and calling him by name. 'Cædmon,' he said, 'sing me something!' 'I cannot sing,' he said; 'for I have come out hither from this feast because I could not sing.' Again he who spoke with him said, 'But you shall sing to me.' 'What,' he said, 'ought I to sing?' And he answered, 'Sing the origin of creatures.' Having received which answer he began immediately to sing, in praise of God the Creator, verses of which this is the sense:—'Now we ought to praise the Author of the Heavenly Kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of Glory. How He, through the Eternal God, became the author of all marvels; Omnipotent Guardian, who created for the sons of men, first Heaven for their roof, and then the earth.' This is the sense, but not the order, of the words which he sang when sleeping."

It is further told that Cædmon remembered on waking the few lines he had made in his sleep, and proceeded to make others like them. Now all this may be true without a miracle. In his lay habit Cædmon had listened to the preaching and had reverenced the self-denying practice of the Culdee missionaries. The songs he never learnt by rote he left unlearnt, hardly conscious that this was because they did not satisfy him. He evaded his turn with the harp at feasts.

* Ad stabula jumentorum, quorum ei custodia nocte illâ erat delegata." Jumenta are any animals that are yoked, draught animals, or beasts of burden.

On this occasion he went out from among his comrades—some of whom had ridden or come in vehicles to the place of festival—because he it was among the guests whose turn it was that night, in the half-civilised community not unused to cattle-plunder, to keep night-watch over the beasts of the whole company. The rude feast and song might have impressed the imagination of a poet warmed and influenced by the report of zealous preachers. So, dreaming on his watch, he might have been prepared for the embodiment in vision of his waking thought; his thought having been that the song demanded from the Christian in those rough days must celebrate to men the glory of the King of Hosts, the Lord Almighty. "What," he asked still, when dreaming, "ought I to sing?" and the vision answered, "Sing the origin of creatures." In that night, dreaming and waking, he began to weave the solemn song, and his soul, stirred by his theme, seemed to him stirred by sudden inspiration.

Cædmon went in the morning, Bede tells us, to the steward of town-lands who was set over him, and pointed out the gift he had discovered. He was then taken to the abbess, who ordered him in the presence of more learned men to tell his dream and repeat his poem. All judged his gift to be from God. They set before him some piece of sacred history or doctrine, asking him to put it, if he were able, into verse. He went home and returned next day with the piece versified. The abbess then advised him to put off his secular habit and become a monk, and having received him, with all his goods, into the monastery, caused him to be taught the series of sacred history. All that Cædmon received thus into his ear "by remembering and, like a clean animal, by ruminating, he turned into sweetest verse, and by rendering it back to them more smoothly, made his teachers to be in turn his hearers. But he sang," Bede adds, in summary of his work, "of earth's creation and the origin of the human race and all the history of

Genesis, of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt and entrance into the promised land; of many other histories of Holy Writ, of the Lord's Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and of the teaching of the apostles. Also he made many poems of the terror of judgment to come, and of the fear of hell, and of the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom; many others also of divine blessing and judgments, in all which his care was to draw men from the love of wicked deeds and excite them to the love and desire of well doing." We are further told that our first Christian poet was pious, humble, zealous against wrong; that at last, after fourteen days of mortal illness, he caused himself to be carried to a part of the monastery appointed for the infirm and dying, and that there, receiving the last sacrament, and being as he said to the brethren about him "very kindly disposed to you and all God's men," he died in a calm sleep.

We have no record of Cædmon's life and work but this which we receive from Bede, who was a north countryman, writing not more than sixty years after the death of Cædmon. In support of Bede's account we have also the single MS. of a large fragment of religious poetry, corresponding well with what is said of Cædmon's work, and apparently too good to have proceeded from some other unnamed and unconsidered writer. The opening of this fragment corresponds also sufficiently, as the reader may have already observed, since the two openings have incidentally been quoted, with Bede's professedly inexact Latin prose version of its purport. But when King Alfred translated Bede, he seems to have retranslated Bede's Latin prose into Anglo-Saxon verses of his own, which, like Bede's version, display only a general correspondence in their sense and spirit with the opening of that poem which we now receive as Cædmon's Paraphrase. For this reason it is, of course, in the power of anyone to say, and some,

therefore, do say, that King Alfred quoted literally from another poem, which was that of the real Cædmon, and that a pseudo-Cædmon wrote that which remains to us. To a MS. of Bede written in the eighth century, which is in the library of the University of Cambridge, there is appended, in a different handwriting, a Northumbrian version of the opening lines of the Paraphrase, which is so near to Bede's text that either the Latin is from the Northumbrian English, or, as I rather think, the Northumbrian English is from the Latin. Ground can be found, also, on which to raise an opinion that, although the poem—a poem, and a noble one—exists, and cannot itself be explained out of existence, yet at least there never was a man named Cædmon by whom it could have been written. If so, we should lose little, having the poem. Somebody wrote it, and for want of other name Cædmon will serve to represent him; or them, if we walk in the new paths of criticism and distribute the work in fragments among a little company of authors, and allot the shares due to the several members of the firm of Cædmon and Co. Let us see first what the poem is like, and then discuss the questions that arise out of it.

Cædmon's Poem.

Cædmon's poem begins with the story of Creation, and joins with it the same legend of the fall of Satan that was joined with it in mediæval times, and used in his "Paradise Lost" by Milton. This was founded on a passage in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah (verses 12—15), where Israel is to take up the proverb against the King of Babylon: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the

Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit." Pope Gregory the Great was among the Fathers who applied this symbolical representation of the King of Babylon, in his splendour and his humiliation, to Satan in his fall from heaven; probably because Babylon is in Scripture a type of tyrannical self-idolising power, and is connected in the Book of Revelation with the empire of the Evil One. Cædmon represented Satan as the Angel of Presumption holding counsel with the fallen spirits, and there are one or two fine thoughts in his poem which are to be found afterwards in Milton's treatment of the same theme. As the old work was in the hands of Milton's friend Junius for years before "Paradise Lost" appeared, and as Milton included thoughts from old poets of Greece in his epic, it is not improbable that he also consciously enshrined in it a thought or two from his friend's description to him of the work of our first Christian bard, who was also the greatest of the poets produced in First-English times. I translate into blank verse very literally the opening of

CÆDMON'S PARAPHRASE.

I.

Most right it is that we praise with our words,
Love in our minds, the Warden of the Skies,
Glorious King of all the hosts of men;
He speeds the strong, and is the Head of all
His high creation, the Almighty Lord.
None formed Him, no first was nor last shall be
Of the Eternal Ruler, but His sway
Is everlasting over thrones in heaven.
With powers on high, soothfast and steadfast, He
Ruled the wide home of heaven's bosom spread
By God's might for the guardians of souls,
The Sons of Glory. Hosts of angels shone,
Glad with their Maker; bright their bliss and rich
The fruitage of their lives; their glory sure,
They served and praised their King, with joy gave praise

To Him, their Life-Lord, in whose aiding care
They judged themselves most blessèd. Sin unknown,
Offence unformed, still with their Parent Lord
They lived in peace, raising aloft in heaven
Right and truth only, ere the Angel Chief
Through Pride divided them and led astray.
Their own well-being they would bear no more,
But cast themselves out of the love of God.
Great in Presumption against the Most High
They would divide the radiant throng far spread,
The resting-place of glory. Even there
Pain came to them, Envy and Pride began
There first to weave ill counsel and to stir
The minds of angels. Then, athirst for strife,
He said that northward * he would own in heaven
A home and a high Throne. Then God was wroth,
And for the host He had made glorious,
For those pledge-breakers, our souls' guardians,
The Lord made anguish a reward, a home
In banishment, hell groans, hard pain, and bade
That torture-house abide their joyless fall.
When with eternal night and sulphur pains,
Fulness of fire, dread cold, reek and red flames,
He knew it filled, then through that hopeless home
He bade the woful horror to increase.
Banded in blameful counsel against God,
Their wrath had wrath for wages. In fierce mood

* *Northward . . . . in Heaven.* So also in "Paradise Lost," Bk. v., lines 688, 689, Satan says—

——"We possess
The quarters of the north."

This, like the rest of the legend, has its source in the passage of Isaiah above referred to: "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, *in the sides of the north.*" In the same book of "Paradise Lost, lines 725, 726, it is said of him that he

——"Intends to erect his throne,
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north."

And in lines 755—766 there is reference both to the North and to the Mount of the Congregation.

They said they would, and might with ease, possess
The kingdom. Him that lying hope betrayed,
After the Lord of Might, high King of Heaven,
Highest, upraised his hand against that host.
False and devoid of counsel they might not
Share strength against their Maker. He in wrath
Clave their bold mood, bowed utterly their boast,
Struck from the sinful scathers kingdom, power,
Glory and gladness: from the opposers took
His joy, His peace, their bright supremacy,
And, with sure march, by His own might poured down
Avenging anger on His enemies.
Stern in displeasure, with consuming wrath,
By hostile grasp He crushed them in His arms;
Ireful He from their home, their glory seats
Banished His foes; and that proud angel tribe,
Malicious host of spirits bowed with care,
He, the Creator, Lord of all Might, sent
Far journeying, with bruisèd pride and broken threat,
Strength bent, and beauty blotted. They exiled
Were bound on their swart ways. Loud laugh no more
Was theirs, but in hell-pain they wailed accurst,
Knowing sore sorrow and the sulphur throes,
Roofed in with darkness: the full recompense
Of those advancing battle against God.

II.

But after as before was peace in Heaven,
Fair rule of love; dear unto all the Lord
Of Lords, the King of Hosts, to all His own,
And glories of the good who possessed joy
In Heaven the Almighty Father still increased.
Then peace was among dwellers in the sky,
Blaming and lawless malice were gone out,
And angels feared no more, since plotting foes
Who cast off Heaven were bereft of light.
Their glory seats behind them in God's realm,
Enlarged with gifts, stood happy, bright with bloom,
But ownerless since the cursed spirits went
Wretched to exile within bars of hell.
Then thought within His mind the Lord of Hosts

How He again might fix within His rule
The great creation, thrones of heavenly light
High in the heavens for a better band,
Since the proud scathers had relinquished them.
The holy God, therefore, in His great might
Willed that there should be set beneath heaven's span
Earth, firmament, wide waves, created world,
Replacing foes cast headlong from their home.
Here yet was naught save darkness of the cave,
The broad abyss, whereon the steadfast king
Looked with his eyes and saw that space of gloom,
Saw the dark cloud lower in lasting night,
Was deep and dim, vain, useless, strange to God,
Black under heaven, wan, waste, till through His word
The King of Glory had created life.
Here first the Eternal Father, guard of all,
Of heaven and earth, raised up the firmament,
The Almighty Lord set firm by His strong power
This roomy land; grass greened not yet the plain,
Ocean far spread hid the wan ways in gloom.
Then was the Spirit gloriously bright
Of Heaven's Keeper borne over the deep
Swiftly. The Life-giver, the Angel's Lord,
Over the ample ground bade come forth Light.
Quickly the High King's bidding was obeyed,
Over the waste there shone light's holy ray.
Then parted He, Lord of triumphant might,
Shadow from shining, darkness from the light.
Light, by the Word of God, was first named day.

The story of Creation is continued until God's return to Heaven, after instruction and counsel to Adam and Eve. Then Cædmon proceeds :—

IV.

The Almighty had disposed ten Angel tribes,
The Holy Father by His strength of hand,
That they whom He well trusted should serve Him
And work His will. For that the holy God
Gave intellect, and shaped them with His hands.
In happiness He placed them, and to one

He added prevalence and might of thought,
Sway over much, next highest to Himself
In Heaven's realm. Him He had wrought so bright
That pure as starlight was in heaven the form
Which God the Lord of Hosts had given him.
Praise to the Lord His work, and cherishing
Of heavenly joy, and thankfulness to God
For his share of that gift of light, which then
Had long been his. But he perverted it,
Against Heaven's highest Lord he lifted war,
Against the Most High in His sanctuary.
Dear was he to our Lord, but was not hid
From Him that in his Angel pride arose.
He raised himself against his Maker, sought
Speech full of hate and bold presuming boast.
Refused God suit, said that his own form beamed
With radiance of light, shone bright of hue,
And in his mind he found not service due
To the Lord God, for to himself he seemed
In force and skill greater than all God's host.
Much spake the Angel of Presumption, thought
Through his own craft to make a stronger throne
Higher in Heaven. His mind urged him, he said,
That north and south he should begin to work,
Found buildings; said he questioned whether he
Would serve God. "Wherefore," he said, "shall I toil?
No need have I of master. I can work
With my own hands great marvels, and have power
To build a throne more worthy of a God,
Higher in Heaven. Why shall I for His smile
Serve Him, bend to Him thus in vassalage?
I may be God as He.
Stand by me, strong supporters firm in strife.
Hard-mooded heroes, famous warriors,
Have chosen me for chief; one may take thought
With such for counsel, and with such secure
Large following. My friends in earnest they,
Faithful in all the shaping of their minds;
I am their master, and may rule this realm.
Therefore it seems not right that I should cringe
To God for any good, and I will be
No more His servant."

When the Almighty heard
With how great pride His angel raised himself
Against his Lord, foolishly spake high words
Against the Supreme Father, he that deed
Must expiate, and in the work of strife
Receive his portion, take for punishment
Utmost perdition. So doth every man
Who sets himself in battle against God,
In sinful strife against the Lord Most High.
Then was the Mighty wroth, Heaven's highest Lord
Cast him from his high seat, for he had brought
His Master's hate on him. His favour lost,
The Good was angered against him, and he
Must therefore seek the depth of Hell's fierce pains,
Because he strove against Heaven's highest Lord,
Who shook him from His favour, cast him down
To the deep dales of Hell, where he became
Devil. The fiend with all his comrades fell
From Heaven, Angels, for three nights and days,
From Heaven to Hell, where the Lord changed them all
To Devils, because they his Deed and Word
Refused to worship. Therefore in worse light
Under the Earth beneath, Almighty God
Had placed them triumphless in the swart Hell.
There evening, immeasurably long,
Brings to each fiend renewal of the fire;
Then comes, at dawn, the east wind keen with frost;
Its dart, or fire continual, torment sharp,
The punishment wrought for them, they must bear.
Their world was changed, and those first times filled Hell
With the Deniers. Still the Angels held,
They who fulfilled God's pleasure, Heaven's heights;
Those others, hostile, who such strife had raised
Against their Lord, lie in the fire, bear pangs,
Fierce burning heat in midst of Hell, broad flames,
Fire and therewith also the bitter reek
Of smoke and darkness; for they paid no heed
To service of their God; their wantonness
Of Angel's pride deceived them, who refused
To worship the Almighty Word. Their pain
Was great, then were they fallen to the depth
Of fire in the hot hell for their loose thought

And pride unmeasured, sought another land
That was without light and was full of flame,
Terror immense of fire. Then the fiends felt
That they unnumbered pains had in return,
Through might of God, for their great violence,
But most for pride. Then spoke the haughty king,
Once brightest among Angels, in the heavens
Whitest, and to his Master dear beloved
Of God until they lightly went astray,
And for that madness the Almighty God
Was wroth with him and into ruin cast
Him down to his new bed, and shaped him then
A name, said that the highest should be called
Satan thenceforth, and o'er Hell's swart abyss
Bade him have rule and avoid strife with God.
Satan discoursed, he who henceforth ruled Hell
Spake sorrowing.
God's Angel erst, he had shone white in Heaven,
Till his soul urged, and most of all its Pride,
That of the Lord of Hosts he should no more
Bend to the Word. About his heart his soul
Tumultuously heaved, hot pains of wrath
Without him.

Then said he, "Most unlike this narrow place
To that which once we knew, high in Heaven's realm,
Which my Lord gave me, though therein no more
For the Almighty we hold royalties.
Yet right hath He not done in striking us
Down to the fiery bottom of hot Hell,
Banished from Heaven's kingdom, with decree
That He will set in it the race of Man.
Worst of my sorrows this, that, wrought of Earth,
Adam shall sit in bliss on my strong throne,
Whilst we these pangs endure, this grief in Hell.
Woe ! Woe ! had I the power of my hands,

* ———"Yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe."
("Paradise Lost," i. 62–64.)

And for a season, for one winter's space,
Might be without ; then with this Host I—
But iron binds me round ; this coil of chains
Rides me ; I rule no more ; close bonds of Hell
Hem me their prisoner. Above, below,
Here is vast fire, and never have I seen
More loathly landscape ; never fade the flames,
Hot over Hell. Rings clasp me, smooth hard bands
Mar motion, stay my wandering, feet bound,
Hands fastened, and the ways of these Hell gates
Accurst so that I cannot free my limbs ;
Great lattice bars, hard iron hammered hot,
Lie round me, wherewith God hath bound me down
Fast by the neck.
So know I that He knew
My mind, and that the Lord of Hosts perceived
That if between us two by Adam came
Evil towards that royalty of Heaven,
I having power of my hands—
But now we suffer throes in Hell, gloom, heat,
Grim, bottomless ; us God Himself hath swept
Into these mists of darkness, wherefore sin
Can He not lay against us that we planned
Evil against Him in the land. Of light
He hath shorn us, cast us into utmost pain.
May we not then plan vengeance, pay Him back
With any hurt, since shorn by Him of light?
Now He hath set the bounds of a mid-earth
Where after His own image He hath wrought
Man, by whom He will people once again
Heaven's kingdom with pure souls. Therefore intent
Must be our thought that, if we ever may,
On Adam and his offspring we may wreak
Revenge, and, if we can devise a way,
Pervert His will. I trust no more the light
Which he thinks long to enjoy with angel power.
Bliss we obtain no more, nor can attain
To weaken God's strong will ; but let us now
Turn from the race of Man that heavenly realm
Which may no more be ours, contrive that they
Forfeit His favour, undo what His Word
Ordained : then wroth of mind He from His grace

Will cast them, then shall they too seek this Hell
And these grim depths. Then may we for ourselves
Have them in this strong durance, sons of men
For servants. Of the warfare let us now
Begin to take thought. If of old I gave
To any thane, while we in that good realm
Sat happy and had power of our thrones,
Gifts of a Prince, then at no dearer time
Could he reward my gift if any now
Among my followers would be my friend,
That he might pass forth upward from these bounds,
Had power with him that, winged, he might fly,
Borne on the clouds, to where stand Adam and Eve
Wrought on Earth's kingdom, girt with happiness,
While we are cast down into this deep dale.
Now these are worthier to the Lord, may own
The blessing rightly ours in Heaven's realm,
This the design apportioned to mankind.
Sore is my mind and rue is in my thought
That ever henceforth they should possess Heaven.
If ever any of you in any way
May turn them from the teaching of God's Word
They shall be evil to Him, and if they
Break His commandment, then will He be wroth
Against them, then will be withdrawn from them
Their happiness, and punishment prepared,
Some grievous share of harm. Think all of this,
How to deceive them. In these fetters then
I can take rest, if they that kingdom lose.
He who shall do this hath prompt recompense
Henceforth for ever of what may be won
Of gain within these fires. I let him sit
Beside myself."

[An incomplete sentence is then followed by a gap in the MS., which goes on] :—

Then God's antagonist arrayed himself
Swift in rich arms. He had a guileful mind.
The hero set the helmet on his head
And bound it fast, fixed it with clasps. He knew
Many a speech deceitful, turned him thence,

Hardy of mind, departed through Hell's doors,
Striking the flames in two with a fiend's power;*

Would secretly deceive with wicked deed
Men, the Lord's subjects, that misled, forlorn,
To God they became evil. So he fared,
Through his fiend's power, till on Earth he found
Adam, God's handiwork, with him his wife,
The fairest woman.

Satan finds Adam and Eve in the garden by the two trees unlike in their fruit. In disguise as a serpent the fiend first represents himself to Adam as a messenger from God, who now bids him learn science by eating of the tree of knowledge. Adam replies that he was forbidden to do so, and that the messenger brings no token from his Lord. The serpent then turns wroth to the woman, and urging upon her the anger of God that will follow Adam's rejection of His messenger, counsels her to ward off punishment from her husband. Let her try the fruit, and prove what light comes of obedience to the message; then she can reassure Adam, and "I will conceal from your Lord that Adam spake to me such harmful words." The fiend thus

* ——— "On each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale."
("Paradise Lost," i. 222–224.)

Such parallels imply no imitation. These are thoughts that belong naturally to the vivid image formed in a true poet's mind. It is enough to learn from them that Cædmon too saw what he sang, and formed within his mind grand pictures, though he represents them only with a few direct and simple words. Cædmon also doubtless obtained thoughts as well as incidents from the Rabbinical traditions current in a church under strong influences from the East. Milton too was acquainted with them. More than one parallel passage, for example, shows that among the books he had caused to be read to him was the Latin version of "The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer," published by Vorstius in 1654.

beguiles the woman with his lies; "to her the Creator had assigned a weaker mind." Eve eats of the fruit, and is immediately cheated with so fair a vision and a sense of light, that she urges her experience as a heavenly token upon Adam, and exhorts him to eat lest he offend. "Who," she asked, "could send me such knowledge, if God, Heaven's ruler, were not sending it? I can hear from afar, and see so widely through all the world over the broad creation: I can hear in heaven the joy of the firmament. It became light to me in my mind, within and without, after I tasted of the fruit. I now have it here in my hand, my good lord, and will gladly give it thee."

Eve urged all day, in the belief that she was urging God's command, the serpent helping, "yet did she it through faithful mind, knew not that hence so many ills must follow to mankind." At last "he from the woman took hell and death, though it was not so called, but it must have the name of fruit."

The poet describes next at some length the exultation of the fiend and his return to "the broad flames, the roofs of hell where lay his master bound in fetters." There follows sorrow of Adam and Eve in the garden, their consciousness of nakedness and dread of God; the new sense that enables them to "see the swart hell, greedy and ravenous; now mayest thou from hence hear it raging."

The story of the expulsion from Paradise is next told according to the narrative of Genesis; and then is told the Scripture story of Cain and Abel, followed as in Genesis (ch. v.) by a genealogy, of which Cædmon makes poetry by interspersing memorable incidents, and recording Enoch as the first builder of cities, Jubal the first who awoke the music of the harp, Tubal Cain the first smith, and Enos "first of all children of men who called on God, after Adam stept on the green grass with spirit dignified." Then, closely following the narrative in Genesis, we have the

Scripture story of the Flood. Here the poet appears in the vivid image he conveys, by simple words, of the rush of waters and the riding of the ark "at large under the skies over the orb of ocean." With a fine touch of his own poetry, in exact harmony with the feeling of a people for whom the raven was the carrion bird that fed upon the slain in battle, Cædmon accounts for the raven's not returning to the ark. "For the exulting fowl perched on the floating corpses."

The verse tells of the covenant of the rainbow, and gives from tradition the names of the women in the ark, Percoba, Olla, Olliva, and Ollivani. The narrative of Genesis is still followed, and again the instinct of the true poet appears in the manner of converting into song the genealogies of the tenth chapter. Next follows the story of the building of the tower of Babel and of the confusion of tongues, from which we are taken, still in the order of the sacred text, to the history of Abraham and Lot. The best charm of Cædmon's poetry, free as it is from extraneous ornament of metaphor or simile, is that he conceives worthily the Scripture narrative, realises to himself every action, and tells not merely what he has heard, but what, having heard, he has also seen. When Abram, going down into Egypt, counsels Sarah, the poet writes, "Abram spake —he saw the Egyptian's white-horned roofs and high burgh brightly glitter." When the narrative comes to the battle in which Lot was taken prisoner, in Cædmon's song the battle rages, as it raged in gleemens' songs, for pleasure of the people; and after the battle a few words present a distinct image of the messenger of evil news, "then a warrior hastily went journeying, one, a leaving of the weapons, who had been saved in battle, to seek Abram." And after the rescue of Lot, which is again pictured clearly, the returning women saw wide around "the birds tearing amid the slaughter of swords." The whole episode, including dialogue between

Abram and the King of Sodom, when Abram refuses to take for himself spoils of his victory, is so elaborated that the Christian poet might find favour for his Scripture-song among the roughest warriors within the Mead Hall.

From the battle-songs we pass to the story of Sarah, and of Hagar and Ishmael, and Sarah's "joyless laughter" when it was promised that she should become a mother. The tale of Sodom and Gomorrah ends with a clearly defined picture of Lot's wife turned into a salt stone. The sacred text is then followed by Cædmon through every incident until we come to the trial of Abraham's faith in the sacrifice of Isaac on the Mount. With this grand lesson of faith in God, Cædmon's Paraphrase of Genesis, so far as it is extant, ends; and here it is very possible that Cædmon himself may have ended it. He omits no circumstance, describes as from life the preparation for the sacrifice according to his own people's manner of building up a pile for burning some dead chief upon the high down by the sea; and he places Abraham's mount by the sea, so that from a spectacle not unfamiliar to themselves the sacred poet leads his hearers to a real sense of the scene, when Abraham "began to load the pile, awaken fire, and fettered the hands and feet of his child, then hove on the pile young Isaac, and then hastily gripped the sword by the hilt, would kill his son with his own hands, quench the fire with the youth's gore."

From this scene of God's blessing on the perfect faith of Abraham we pass to the Paraphrase from Exodus of the story of the power of Him who was able to lead His chosen people even through the depths of the great waters. What is called the Paraphrase of Exodus is in fact a single poem on the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea and the destruction of the host of Pharaoh. It opens in triumphant strain, and tells briefly by way of introduction what had been the previous history of Israel in Egypt. Besides the pillar of

fire by night and the cloud by day there is a holy sail sheltering the favoured people from the fierceness of the sun. So Cædmon brings the shining host to its camp on the sea-shore. Then he sees the host of Pharaoh in pursuit, glittering over the holt. The followers of Moses were despondent. "They prepared their arms, advanced the war, bucklers glittered, trumpets sang, standards rattled, they trod the nation's frontier. Around them screamed the fowls of war, greedy of battle, dewy-feathered, the wolves sang their horrid evensong." Thus vividly the story is presented through the ears to all the senses of its hearers; and when the great miracle has been worked, the troops of the Israelites march, with the Lion of Judah in the van, in solemn pomp over the "many-coloured fields," the "rugged army roads" of the sea-bottom. But here into the full heat of the story, misled by apparent connection of some closing and opening lines, the copyist interpolates a cold, weak poem by another hand, which begins with the flood and ends with the sacrifice of Isaac. We come as out of close into fresh air when we have passed through this blunder of the transcriber, which stands in place of the first entry of Pharaoh's host between the sea-walls, and from "the land of Canaan, thy people, father of noble children, of folk most excellent," pass suddenly to Cædmon's, "The folk was affrighted, the flood-dread seized on their sad souls; ocean wailed with death, the mountain-heights were with blood besteamed, the sea foamed gore, crying was in the waves, the water full of weapons, a death-mist rose." The rest is all perfect in its simplicity of vigour. The picture of the scene when "bursting ocean whooped in bloody storm" and "corpses rolled," leads to a suggestion rudely sublime of "the Guardian of the Flood," who "struck the unsheltering wave with an ancient faulchion," so that in the swoon of death those armies slept.

From the power of God leading His children safely

through the mighty waters the poet turns, in the next subject of the extant Paraphrase, to the same power leading Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael, with their garments unsinged, through the furnace-fire. It is for the sake of this incident that we have now the Paraphrase from the Scripture story of Daniel, and here we have twice repeated in different form the most elaborate simile, one of the very few similes of any kind, in Anglo-Saxon poetry: "In the hot oven all the pious three. With them was there also one in sight, an angel of the Almighty. Naught therein harmed them; but it was all most like as when in summer the sun shineth and in day dewdrops are scattered by the wind."

The Paraphrase from the story of Daniel closes with Belshazzar's feast. And this is the end of the Old Testament Paraphrase as written by a careful hand in the first part of the Cædmon MS. The rest, written in later hand, has for its subject Christ and Satan. It represents Satan in hell dreading the power of the Mediator, the descent of Christ and that rescue of souls described in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, which was in old time a favourite subject of sacred story under the name of the Harrowing of Hell. There are not only gaps in this part of the manuscript, but there are manifest confusions and misplacements in the copying. Verses of several religious poets seem, indeed, here to have been pieced together. The "Harrowing of Hell" ends with a fragment having no connection with it, although joined to it without break, from a paraphrase of Gospel history describing our Lord's fasting and temptation in the wilderness. This, I think, is by Cædmon. It may be worth while to notice that a legendary addition is made to the command of Christ to Satan, "Depart from me," in Satan's condemnation, as a punishment for his temptation of the Lord, to measure with his hands his place of torment. He finds it to be a hundred thousand miles from the door to the bottom of "hell's drear abyss."

We may now note the relation of this great Christian poem with the early Teutonic poems of like character.

Muspilli.

There is a fragment of an old High German alliterative poem on the Day of Judgment—"Muspilli"—which has a theme included, of course, in the range of the old Saxon poem called the "Heliand," designed to set forth Christ's life and teaching.

The fragment of "Muspilli" was discovered in the monastery of St. Emmeram in Regensburg. A sermon, ascribed to St. Augustine, contained Latin acrostic verses—on ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΣΩΤΗΡ—describing the signs of judgment, and describing them as they are to be found in a chapter of Augustine's "De Civitate Dei." The whole sermon was elegantly written upon parchment, and closed with four lines showing the book to have been a gift to one who is addressed as "summe puer," from Adalrammus, a pastor, who is his devoted and inconsiderable servant. This writer has been identified with Adalram, third of the Archbishops of Salzburg, who was consecrated in 821 and died in 836; and the "Summe Puer" has been identified with Louis II., the German who, as King of Bavaria, held his court in Regensburg from the year 828, and was King of Germany from 843 to 876. His widow Hemma was buried at St. Emmeram, and the supposition is that the manuscript was left to the house by her, and that about the Latin verses on the signs of judgment King Louis wrote with his own unskilful hand, upon margins and blank spaces, the Old High German fragment of "Muspilli" on the Judgment Day. The MS. is preserved now in the Royal Library at Munich.* If this theory of its origin be

* "Muspilli" was first edited, in 1832, as contribution to a literary journal, by J. A. Schmeller, custodian of the Royal Library at Munich, and separately issued with text, translation, facsimile of the writing, notes, and added glossary, the whole forming only a pamphlet of 39 pages.

as true as it is likely to be true, the date of the handwriting would be not much later than the year 828.

"Muspilli" belongs to a time when myths of the old heathen mythology blended with the faith of the new converts to Christianity. Muspel, in Scandinavian mythology, was a great world of fire that at the end would break out and devour the earth and all that was upon it. Muspilli therefore served to express the final conflagration of the world; and that is the subject of this fragment, which shows also an adaptation of pre-Christian to Christian ideas, in the fight of Elias with Antichrist, which may answer to the contest between Thor and Surtur. This is the sense of the fragment of

MUSPILLI.

—— his day come that he shall die.
Soon as the Soul then travels on its way,
And leaves the body lying, comes a host
Of Heaven's stars, another out of hell.
They battle for it. Well may the Soul then
Stand full of care, till it is shown which host
Shall fetch it. And if Satan's followers
Win it, he takes it where its suffering
Returns, in fire and darkness, dreadful fate.
But when the stars from Heaven fetch it, when
It is won by the Angels as their own,
They lift it to Heaven's Kingdom, where there is
Life without death, Light without darkness, Home
Without a care. There none fall sick. The man
Who wins a dwelling place in Paradise,
A house in Heaven, has there help enough.
Therefore need is for all men, that there be
Urgings within to do the will of God
Gladly, and earnestly avoid hell fire,
Pains of the pitch, hot flame, the offering
Of the old Satan He may think of this,
And weigh it deeply, who knows that he sins.
Woe unto him who must atone for sin
In the deep darkness, burn in the abyss.
Fearful the lot of him who cries to God,

And no help comes to him. The wretched soul
Hopes mercy ; God in Heaven thinks not of her,
Because she wrought amiss here in the world.
When now the great King sends forth His command
For judgment, to which every race of earth
Must come, no child of man can then delay,
For all mankind must join the great assembly.
I have heard wise men say that Antichrist
Will fight then with Elias. The Accursed
Is armed ; the battle is begun between them.
Strong are the warriors, and the cause is great.
Elias battles for eternal life,
He seeks to assure the kingdom of the just ;
Therefore the Lord of Heaven will give him help.
Antichrist stands by the Old Enemy,
By Satan, who will be his overthrow.
He therefore from the battle place will fall
Wounded, be this time wholly overcome.
Yet many of the men of God believe
Elias too will take hurt in the fight.
When the blood of Elias drips to earth,
The streams will dry, the sea devour itself,
The Heavens pass in flames, the moon will fail,
The circle of the earth will be on fire,
No stone remain unshattered on the ground.
Then there breaks in the Day of Recompense.
It comes to seek the mortal home with fire,
Then may no kin save kin from Muspilli.
When the wide earth's in flame, and fire and air
Sweep all,
Where are the landmarks over which one strove
With kinsmen. All the boundaries are burnt,
The Soul stands burdened with its sin, knows not
What it can plead, and goes among the damned.
It is good therefore that the man who comes
To a seat of judgment, should decide aright
Upon each matter. Then when he is judged
He may stand free from care. The wretched man
Stands ignorant of what shall be his lot,
Who has corruptly turned the right aside.
The Devil secretly stands by and keeps
His reckoning of all evil that the man

Has done, before and after, to tell all
When he has come to Judgment. Therefore let
No man take unjust meed.
Then when the Heavenly trumpet rings, and He
Rises who shall be judge of quick and dead,
With Him there rises an uncounted host
Of bold ones that no man can stand against.
He goes to the appointed meeting place.
Then comes the Day men look for from of old.
Then angels fly across the land, awake
The peoples, call them to the Day of Doom.
Many will rise then from the dust, break free
From the grave's burden, take their life again,
Stand to be judged according to their deeds.
When He who shall be judge of quick and dead
Sits at the Judgment, Angel-squadrons stand
About him, countless circle of the blest,
And those who have arisen to be judged.
There nothing can be hid. The hand, the head,
Each limb, down to the smallest finger, speaks,
And tells the wrong it has done among men.
However cunning he may be, no man
Will have the skill to lie, or hide a deed,
So that it be not open to the King,
As far as it has not been wiped away
By alms, and fasting . . . .
. . . . . Then will be brought forth
The holy cross upon which Christ was nailed.
He shows the wounds that He received as man,
For love to this our race. . . . .

That is the fragment of "Muspilli," in which some illegible words have to be made good by conjecture. The description of Doomsday in the latter part of the Cædmon manuscript is given without any interweaving of the old faith with the new; the Paraphrase is simply based on the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew's Gospel. There is no more evidence of poetical genius in this part of the Paraphrase than in "Muspilli." After the descent into hell, and the release there of souls that awaited Him, the Para-

phrase goes on—following the lines of the Creed ascribed to the Apostles—to show how He ascended into Heaven, where He sitteth on the right hand of God, whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, describing in this manner

DOOMSDAY.

Now the great Lord, Almighty God, for us
Hath interceded . . . . . (*leaf wanting in MS.*)
. . . . . the Lord Himself on Doomsday.
Archangels over cities through the earth
Shall call with a loud voice, the trumpets blow.
Men shall then waken from this mould, the dead
Shall rise from dust through power of the Lord.
Longest of days will that be, and loud heard
Its thunder when the Saviour shall come,
The mighty one, on clouds into the world.
Then shall He separate the fair and foul,
On two sides, good and evil. The sooth-fast
Ascend to rest with Him, on His right hand,
With the Skies' Warden. They shall then be glad
Who go into the city of their God
Into His kingdom. And with His right hand
The King of all Created shall bless them,
Shall over all cry, "Ye are welcome! Go
Into the light of glory, Heaven's realm.
There have ye evermore rest without end."
Then shall stand trembling the condemned, who sinned.
When, through fair issue of his deeds, the Son
Of God will judge them, they may hope to go
To the great City, to the angels rise
As others did, but the eternal Lord
Shall speak to them, shall say over them all,
"Descend now, ye accurst, into the house
Of punishment, for now I know not you."
After those words curst spirits quickly come,
Hell's thralls, by thousands shall go round them, lead
Into the Scather's cave, thrust to the pit,
The close constraint, whence never afterwards
They may come up, but there shall suffer pain
Eternal, bonds and prison, and endure

The deep and cold abyss, speech with the devil.
. . . . . for they oft forgot
The Eternal Ruler who should be their hope.
Therefore let us resolve, throughout this world,
Obedience to the Saviour, feel in heart
The Spirit's breath, God's gift, and how the blest
Sit high in glory with the Son of God.

The "Heliand" (Der Heiland, the Saviour) is a poem in Old Saxon, setting forth in alliterative verse a harmony of the Gospels. It tells the tale of Christ the King, from His Birth to His Ascension into Heaven, realising Jewish in German ways of life, with homely sincerity. There are two manuscripts of the "Heliand:" one the Codex Monacensis formerly at Bamberg, the other in the Cotton collection of the British Museum. Both repeat many inaccuracies of a preceding copy from which they seem to have been taken. A leaf only of another MS. was discovered at Prague in 1881.* We must assume that the author of the "Heliand" belonged to a religious order, for it has been shown that he founds his harmony of the Gospel narrative not only upon the Evangelists, but also upon the harmony ascribed to Tatian; upon Bede's Commentaries on Luke and Mark; upon Alcuin's Commentary on John; and upon the Commentary on Matthew's Gospel by Hrabanus Maurus, which was written in the year 820 or 821. The date of the "Heliand," therefore, cannot be earlier than that. It must be more than a hundred years later than the Paraphrase of

Heliand.

* Edited at Vienna by Hans Lambel in 1881. The "Heliand" was first edited in 1830 by J. Andreas Schmeller (first editor also of "Muspilli")—"Heliand, Poema Saxonicum seculi noni," with a second volume containing a Glossary, in 1840. It was edited by J. R. Köne in 1855; by Moritz Heyne in 1866 (second edition, 1873); by Heinrich Rückert in 1876; and by Eduard Sievers in 1878, that being now the standard edition.

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Cædmon to which Bede refers. There is a story—perhaps of the "Heliand"—which was first given by Flacius Illyricus in 1562, which says that Louis the Pious (father of the Louis who is supposed to have copied the fragment of "Muspilli"), desiring to bring his people to God, instructed a poet who was in high esteem among the Saxons thus to make the Gospel known to the unlearned. He then, beginning from the Creation of the World, selected the chief parts of Bible history, and, treating some things in a mystical sense, put the Old and the New Testament into poetical form in the language of the people. Latin verses follow which represent the author as a Saxon peasant who followed the plough, and when sleeping under the shade of a tree, while watching a few cattle, had heard a voice from Heaven ordering him to sing of God; from peasant he became poet, began his song with the Creation and followed the story on to the Advent of Christ. This clearly is a borrowing from Bede. The poet who received his commission to instruct the people from Louis le Debonnaire, in the ninth century, could not have been the poet who died in the year 680, and to whom Bede, writing two or three generations before King Louis, had looked back.

But the one extant MS. of Cædmon is of the tenth century. There is room, therefore, for free suggestion of interpolations, and although the important part of Cædmon's Paraphrase deals with the Old Testament and "Heliand" deals wholly with the New, Eduard Sievers has suggested reasons* for a belief that the passage in the Paraphrase of Genesis (from line 235 to line 851) which describes the fall of the rebellious angels and of man—the whole, in short, of that part which has obtained for Cædmon the name of the

Relation of the *Heliand* to Cædmon's Paraphrase.

* "Der Heliand und die angelsächsische Genesis" (Halle, 1875). The theory is opposed by E. Wilken in "Correspondenzblatt des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung," iii. 36.

Anglo-Saxon Milton—is an interpolation from an otherwise unknown work in old Saxon, by the author of the "Heliand." Naming the parts of Genesis outside these lines A, and these lines B, Sievers reasons first from the baldness and dryness of A and the vigour of B that they are not from the same hand. Then he argues from differences in the poetical vocabulary. The word God occurs more frequently with an adjective in B than in A. "Almighty God" occurs twice in each, but also "the Almighty God" occurs once in B and not in A; "mighty God" occurs three times in B and not in A; "ruling God" ("wealdend") occurs twice in B and not in A; "eternal holy God" occurs once in A and not in B; "eternal God" occurs once in B and not in A; "holy God" occurs three times in A and not in B; "the holy God" occurs once in B and not in A; "preserving" ("nergend") "God" occurs once in A and not in B; "God of Heaven" occurs once in B and not in A; "God of Glory" occurs once in A and not in B. Then the names for God are taken: "Metod," the Creator as Measurer, is used thirteen times in A and three times in B. But the names of God used in Anglo-Saxon poetry are fitted to their context. A tells the story of Creation, and God is spoken of as the Creator. In B, the story of the fall of the angels, the poet is concerned more with His power. Of the word "drihten," which conveyed the sense of power and lordship from the idea of headship of a family, there is equal use, with natural variations of epithets; "þeoden" is more used in A than in B; "frea," in which lordship is associated with freedom from control, is used seventeen times in A and not at all in B. "Cyning," king, is used often in A, but only once in B without the prefix making it the King of Heaven; a distinction simply poetical, "heofon cyning" being appropriate to that part of the poem in which the King of Heaven is opposed by Satan, who is King in Hell. The other parallels show the poetical use in this first part of

Cædmon of various attributes of Deity as names for God which, while the story is of the rebellious angels, become naturally more restricted to the forms suggesting supreme power.*

The other part of Dr. Sievers's argument stands upon firmer ground, and has a distinct value, although it may not lead to the conclusion he would draw from it. He says that in the part of the Paraphrase which he associates with the "Heliand," and distinguishes as B, there are words and forms of speech which correspond with words and forms of speech in the "Heliand," and not with the vocabulary of any other First-English poems.†

* Thus "se alwalda," the all-wielder, occurs seven times in B and not in A. "Nergend," the preserver, occurs ten times in A and only once in B; "Weard," the protector, occurs fifteen times in A and only once in B, because the theme in B is of the power of God over the rebellious spirits, in A is of God the Creator, Protector, and Preserver of those who obey Him.

† The following is Sievers's list of these coincidences. *Substantives:* giongorscipe; giongordóm; stól, as simple substantive; strið, hygesceaft, þegnscipe; bodscipe; gebodscipe; hearmscearu; lygen; hellgeþwing; þreaweorc; síma. *Adjectives and adverbs:* heardmód; lofsum; wráðmód; wídbrád; wár; wárlice. *Verbs:* gewrixlan; rómigan; bedreógan; árendian. *Forms.* *Substantive with substantive:* word and wise; hearran hyldo; hyldo heofoncyninges. *Substantive with adjective:* fæcne hyge; suht swáre; forman worde; wlitesciéne wíf; láð strið; idesa scénost; wifa wlitegost; wárum wordum; gódlic gard; bitre on breóstum. *Substantive with verb:* géwit gifan, forgifan; ráed geþencan; dáed ongyldan; hyldo wyrcan; ambyht lástan; tácen óðiéwan; hyldo habban; hearm gespræcan; mód lástan; freme láran; láð sprecan; geongordóm læstan; þreáweorc þolian; gesceapu bídan; wordum trúwian; hnígan mid heáfdum; on hyge hreówan; on sið faran; to þance geþénian; forlátan mid lygenum; on mód niman; to gebede, on gebed feallan. *Other combinations:* þat oðer eal; ealra . . . mæst; dim and þystre; æfter to aldre; to langre hwíle; ofer langne weg; warian with accusative, and warian hine wið; þeówian æfter; geofian wið; frécne

There is little to be inferred from the presence of words in one First-English poem that are not found in any other. The vocabulary known to us is drawn from no very large body of literature. Reference to a glossary of words used by the poets shows under the letter A alone about two hundred words, or forms of words, that occur only once in the known body of First-English poetry, and if Æ be included, there are fifty more to be added. Words of the most natural formation would abound in any list of these solitaries. The words and phrases, also, that are said to correspond with

fylgian; georne fulgangan. Lastly, there are the parallel forms of speech:

Genesis.	Heliand.
282. hwy sceal ic æfter his hyldo þeówian.	1472. mér sculun gí aftar is huldi thionón.
295. sceolde he þá dǽd ongyldan.	4418. Sie sculun thea dád antgelden.
330. wǽron þá befeallene fyre to botme on þa hátan hell. / 351. þæt he us hæfð befylled to botme helle þúre hátan.	2510. bifelliad sia ina ferne te bodme an thene hétan hel.
353. weoll him on innan hyge ym his heortan.	3688. thes uuell im an innan hugi um is herta.
484. sceolde hine yldo beniman ellendæda.	151. habad unc eldi binoman el. lean dádi.
498. þá hét he ᵹe on þysne sið faran, hét þæt þu þisses oferætes æte.	637. thó hét he sie an thane sið faran, het that sie ira árundi al underfundin.
544. ic hæbbe me fæstne geleáfan upto þam ælmihtigan gode.	903. habad hlúttra trenna up te them alomahtigon gode.
614. nu scineð þe leoht fore.	1708. than skínid thí lioht biforan.
641. ac he þeóda gehwám hefonrice forgeaf.	3508. en himilríki gibid he allun theodun.
652. þe he hire swa wǽrlice wordum sægde.	868. hét ina uuárlico uuordum seggean
672. gif hit gegnunga god ne 'onsende heofones waldend.	213. that ina us gegnungo god fon himile selbo sendi.
683. þæt hit gegnunga from gode cóme.	3937. ac it gegnungo fan gode alouualdon kumid.

words and phrases in the "Heliand," are nearly all native. Four of the cited substantives are only formed by adding the suffix, "scipe," to common words. Take the first word in the list—"geong" means "young," "geongra," or "giongra," is a disciple; and "giongorscipe" is discipleship, or the following and obedience that it implies. So with the corresponding phrases. Again, let us take the first phrase in the list. Satan asks, speaking of God, "Why shall I serve for His protection?" (or grace). The word is "hyldo," which occurs in First-English poetry in eight different poems. In the "Heliand" the parallel is, with context added, "You should serve more for His grace than other Jews do, and fulfil God's will if ye would come into the kingdom of Heaven." Sievers relied especially on the word "wǽr" (O.H.G. "wâr;" modern German "wahr") and "wærlice" for true and truly, which occur only in B, while "sóð" and "soðlice" would be the usual words in First-English; on the word "strið" (O.H.G. "strit," modern German "streit") contention, and "bedróg," betrayed. He thought also that the build of the verse in B was more like that of the "Heliand" than A. Then he went on to separate, within limits of B, passage from passage. He pronounced the passage in the speech of Satan before the temptation (lines 371 to 420) to be an interpolation, because there was no trace in it of resemblance to the "Heliand;" and he proceeded to suggest further interpolations by a purely Anglo-Saxon writer, which he would distinguish from the text in which were to be traced resemblances to the old Saxon. His theory, therefore, was that an Anglo-Saxon living in Germany had found pleasure in a poem on the Creation and Fall, by the author of the "Heliand;" that he translated it into First-English, with tasteless and confusing enlargements; that it then became a fragment; and that it was subjected to another process of interpolation, when it was made part of a more comprehensive work. In the introduction to his standard

edition of the text of the "Heliand," published in 1878, Sievers says that his work on the text had not led to any modification of the opinions expressed in his pamphlet of 1875.

Meanwhile there are the simple facts that in the spread of Christianity among Teutonic peoples, the first spring of native energy flowed out of England; that the First-English Christians were active among their kindred tribes of the Continent; and that Cædmon's poem, whether it were this or another—there was such a poem—must have been known to the Old Saxons long before the "Heliand" was written.

History of the Cædmon MS.

The Norman monks paid so little respect to Anglo-Saxon MSS., which they habitually cleaned off with their pumice that they might recover the parchment to their own use,* and in later time so much havoc was made among monastic libraries, that of the extant portion of Cædmon's Paraphrase, as of every important remainder of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and of almost every shorter poem, one copy alone has been discovered. The copy of "Cædmon" (Cod. Jun. XI. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford) is a small folio of 229 pages. The first 212 pages containing the poetry founded upon Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel, are written in a clear hand of the tenth century and adorned as far as page 96 with many illustrative pictures,† spaces being left for continuing the same system of illustration as far as page 213. But after that page another less careful and apparently less ancient handwriting appears. In this hand, no space being left for illustration, there is

* In Wanley's Introd. to his Catalogue of Saxon MSS. there is citation from an Index of MSS. belonging to the year 1248 of such entries as "Item duo Anglica, vetusta et inutilia. Item sermones anglici, vetusti, inutiles. Passionale Sanctorum anglicè scriptum, vetust., inutile."

† Copies of them were engraved for the Antiquarian Society, and published in the 24th volume of the "Archæologia" (for 1832).

added the poem of Christ and Satan, part of which is, I think, of Cædmon's writing.

It was Archbishop Ussher who, in the course of his hunt after books, obtained from dealers in remaining wreck of the old monasteries this important volume. When a young man of three and twenty he was sent over to England to buy books for Trinity College, Dublin, and then worked in concert with Sir Thomas Bodley, who was employed in the same way on behalf of his new library at Oxford. He came to England again, three years later, to collect books and MSS. relating to English history, when that diligent book-collector, Sir Robert Cotton, was one of his friends, and Ussher, having thus begun, remained a book-collector to the last. The MS. of this Paraphrase, obtained in the course of his researches, Ussher gave to Francis Dujon the younger, known in literature as Junius, the learned son of a learned Leyden divinity professor. For Dujon the younger, who had come to England in 1620 as librarian to the Earl of Arundel, and had lived for thirty years with the earl holding that office, was known to Ussher, as to every scholar in England, for an amiable and sociable man. He throve bodily on work, studying and writing fourteen hours a day, and lived, always a student careful to take regular daily exercise and enough sleep and food, to be a hale old man of eighty-eight. The favourite subject of Dujon's research was Anglo-Saxon, in which he believed he could find the etymologies of all the tongues of northern Europe. The kindly scholar left England in 1650, and returned in his old age to die among us. During his absence he caused his copy of the Anglo-Saxon Paraphrase received from Ussher to be printed at Amsterdam,* in the year 1655; and

* "Cædmonis Monachi Paraphrasis poetica Genesios ac præcipuarum Sacræ Paginæ Historiarum, adhinc annos MLXX Anglo-Saxonice conscripta, et nunc primum edita a Francisco Junio, F. F. Amstelo-

having referred to Bede's account of Cædmon he did not then hesitate to name Cædmon as its author. Milton was among the contemporary English scholars who knew Junius and were interested in his studies. He had digested Bede into an English history, and knowing what was published by good scholars at home and abroad, must needs have been interested in the discovery of a work that removed Bede's story of Cædmon out of the region of fable, or, at least, produced an ancient native poem on the very subject to which Milton was himself most strongly attracted. In the years next following the printing of Cædmon's Paraphrase at Amsterdam Milton's mind was occupied with his great poem. The first edition of "Cædmon" was published in 1655. "Paradise Lost" was first published in 1667. It is almost impossible that a scholar like Milton should have taken no interest in a new book of special interest for all, bearing upon a subject more peculiarly interesting to himself, and coming from a scholar of whom we know that he cultivated Milton's familiar acquaintance. From whatever friend was able to inform him, it is reasonable to think that the blind Milton with his eager intellect must have inquired and learnt in what manner the Anglo-Saxon poet sang the Fall of Man; and what was described or translated to him —it might even have been by Somner, who had worked through Cædmon during preparation of his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, which appeared in 1659—there is, as we shall

dami, 1655." It is a small thin 4to. Some fac-similes of the pictures in the MS. were engraved by private subscription in 1755 for insertion among its pages. Junius here names Cædmon on the title-page; but his reason for doing so he gives on page 248 of another book published by him at Amsterdam in the same year, "Observationes in Willerami Abbatis Francicam Paraphrasin Cantici Canticorum." Willeramus was a Franconian abbot of the 11th century, who left philologists a treasure by paraphrasing Solomon's Song into Latin hexameter and prose of the ancient language of the Franks.

find, some reason in "Paradise Lost" itself for believing that he heard with admiration.

Opinions upon Authorship of Cædmon's Paraphrase.

Dr. George Hickes, at the end of the century, looking at the work only with antiquarian eyes, was the first to question the identification of the Anglo-Saxon poem with Bede's poet.* He relied for calling it the work of an imitator of Cædmon on three points, namely, the want of verbal correspondence between the lines in Alfred's version of Bede and the opening lines of the Paraphrase; his own impression that the dialect of the Paraphrase is that of extant verses on a victory of Athelstane in 938, and on the death of Edward in 975; and his impression that the Paraphrase was full of Danish idioms, indicating the language of a Northumbrian who wrote after the long occupation of that province by the Danes. I believe that no Anglo-Saxon scholar of the present day has found in Cædmon Hickes's Anglo-Danish; and if Dr. Hickes could err as he did on the larger point of verbal criticism, his opinion is worth nothing at all on the minute; especially when, as Benjamin Thorpe rightly observed, due allowance has to be made for the interpolations, omissions, and corruptions of transcribers. Transcribers worked for their own people, not for nineteenth century philologists. A Northumbrian poem, wanted for its subject matter by West Saxons, would have its dialect transposed into West Saxon. But for the destruction of First-English MSS. that has so far extinguished records of our earliest literature that we owe almost every piece that has come down to us to the chance survival of a single copy, we might have Cædmon's Paraphrase in several varieties of form and dialect. It happens to have come to us, as copied in the tenth century, in a dialect that was not Cædmon's, though already in the eighth century there must have been a standard of

* "Bishop Nicolson's Correspondence," published by J. Nichols.

English among the lettered class that made the varieties of dialect in formal writings not very different from one another. The religious purpose and the common good being the one thing chiefly considered in these writings, and the clergy themselves being the copyists, there would be no scruple to prevent frequent additions of what might seem to be edifying matter; while a careless and mechanical copyist, or a good worker in a weary hour, might sometimes—as occurs once at least in Cædmon—be misled by some seeming association of ideas into going on from the end of one leaf to the copying of another taken from some other piece of work.

With reference to Bede's account of Cædmon, a Scandinavian story has been cited by Bouterwek, of a poet Thorleifr, buried under a barrow where Halbiôrn, a goatherd, pastured his flock. Halbiôrn, struggling in vain to sing in praise of the dead bard, saw the hill open one night and a huge figure rise out of it. The figure touched his tongue with its finger, recited some verses, and retired again into the tomb. Halbiôrn remembered the verses, and himself became a poet. This legend is of the same class as the Gaelic tale of the recovery of the true form of the Tain Bo.*

Sir Francis Palgrave, who had at first seen nothing incredible in Bede's account of Cædmon, was struck by an analogous story in a fragment entitled "Præfatio in Librum Antiquum linguâ Saxonicâ conscriptum,"† setting forth that "Louis the Pious being desirous to furnish his subjects with a version of the Holy Scriptures, applied to a Saxon bard of great talent and fame. The poet, a peasant or husbandman, when entirely ignorant of his art, had been instructed in a dream to render the precepts of the Divine Law into verse and measure of his native language. His translation, now unfortunately lost, to which the fragment was a

* "E. W." I. 176, 177.

† "Bibliotheca Patrum," vol. xvi. p. 609 (Paris, 1644).

preface, comprehended the whole of the Bible." That was the account of Flacius Illyricus, first given in 1562, found by Sir Francis in the "Bibliotheca Patrum," and theoretically attached, as we have seen, to the "Heliand." It was urged also by Sir Francis Palgrave, when he had thus begun to doubt, that the names of Anglo-Saxon persons were always formed of significant words. There is, he said, no plain and definite Anglo-Saxon sense in the word Cædmon; but the first Book of Genesis is called, after its first words, in the Chaldee Paraphrase or Targum of Onkelos, b'Cadmin or b'Cadmon, meaning "In the beginning;" and from that term it is strongly to be suspected that the name of Cædmon, as the poet of the Paraphrase that opened with the Book of Genesis, was transformed into the name of a person.

"'But,' it was further observed, 'in addition to the value of the word Cadmon as denoting the Chaldaic Book of Genesis, the name of Adam Cadmon also holds a most important station in Cabalistic theology;* the adjective or epithet Cadmon in pure Hebrew signifies "from the East;" and until we can suggest a better explanation of the name given to the Anglo-Saxon poet it will be difficult to avoid the conclusion, that using the Targum as his text, and being also familiar with the Cabalistic doctrines, he assumed the name of Cadmon either from the book which he translated, or from the Cabalistic nomenclature; or that, having arrived in Britain from the East, he designated himself as the Eastern visitor or pilgrim.'" †

We have seen that all dispute between the Cymric and Gaelic Christians of Britain and the Italian missionaries who came with and after Augustine depended on conflict between usages of the Eastern and the Western Church. The abbey at Whitby was, in the north of England, the

* He was the Cosmos in the figure of a man. The reader who thinks the point worth a reference will find a digest of the Cabalistic doctrines in a "Life of Cornelius Agrippa," by the present writer (London, 1856), vol. i. pp. 69—81.

† "Archæologia" (London, 1832), vol. xxiv. p. 342.

chief stronghold of the Culdees of Iona, who drew their religious knowledge and church discipline, not out of Rome, but from Jerusalem and Egypt. As the layman frequently dedicated himself under a new name to religious work, it may very well be that the learned men of Hilda's monastery found a name for their paraphrast of Scripture in the Chaldee title of the first book of the sacred text, which it was his particular service to God to diffuse among his countrymen. Again, as he versified the history they gave him, the Rabbinical character of a few extraneous incidents in the narrative connected with the story of Creation would come from the East through them to him. It was not necessary that, simply to hear what was told him, he should be himself an Oriental scholar. Thus far, then, and setting aside the more remote suggestion of Cabalism, which is not very consistent with its companion theory, and is in itself not very probable, we may assign some weight to Sir Francis Palgrave's theory of the origin of the mere name of Cædmon, without discrediting in anything essential the simple text of Bede. But if we are sometimes enthusiasts in trifles and wish to believe that Cædmon was also the lay name of the poet, let us content ourselves with the replies of both a German and a French scholar, Dr. Bouterwek and Professor Sandras,* who correct the statement that the word Cædmon is without significance in Anglo-Saxon. Dr. Bouterwek translates it into "pirate," M. Sandras into "boatman."

Ettmüller argued that Genesis and Exodus had been written, not by a rustic, but by a cultivated man who had

* "De Cedmone poetâ Anglo-Saxonum vetustissimo brevis Dissertatio. Scripsit Carol. Guil. Bouterwek, Phil. Dr., Gymnasii Elberfeldani Director" (Elberfeld, 1845). "De Carminibus Anglo-Saxonicis Cædmoni Adjudicatis Disquisitio. Has Theses Parisiensi Litterarum Facultati proponebat S. G. Sandras, in Lycæo Claramontensi Professor" (Paris, 1859).

carried arms. He supposed several authors; he regarded Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel as three distinct poems; and of the second part he suggested that a manuscript of various separate poems on the Harrowing of Hell having lost many leaves, so much as remained was read consecutively as a single work.

Dietrich saw in the Old Testament Cædmon a man of genius, and another man of genius in his interpolator; but he thought the New Testament part to be the work of a bad poet.

C. W. M. Grein thought that, subject of course to corruption by time, Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel might be assigned to Cædmon, but of the New Testament, part only, and with greater reserve; the Christ and Satan, the poem on the Temptation in the Wilderness, might possibly be his; and I think Grein was right.

Ernst Götzinger* put aside Hickes's objections to the authenticity of the Paraphrase as untenable, but suggested other objections of his own. He separated altogether, as three poems, Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel. He saw unity in Genesis, though only a fragment of one work, and supposing the author to have followed Ælfric, placed it in the eleventh century. He found differences of treatment of their subjects by the assumed separate authors of Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel. Genesis, he said, is dramatic epic; Exodus lyric-epic; Daniel epic only. He also reckoned Cædmon to be one with the author of the "Heliand"; which could hardly be, so far as Genesis was concerned, if the date of the poem was in the eleventh century.

Hugo Balg† tried an analysis that made the number of

* "Ueber die Dichtungen des Angelsachsen Cædmon und deren Verfasser. Inaugural dissertation zur Erlangung der philosophischen Doktorwürde, von Ernst Götzinger" (Göttingen, 1860).

† "Der Dichter Cædmon und seine Werke. Inaugural dissertation zur Erlangung der philosophischen Doktorwürde" (Bonn, 1882).

poets who wrote the Paraphrase to be seven; giving two to Genesis, another two to Exodus, another two to Daniel, and one to Christ and Satan; but he proceeded to enlarge his expression of diversity of voice by finding in differences of style ground for an opinion that it consisted of several smaller poems.

Friedrich Groschopp* found in the Christ and Satan fragments of one great poem, which a restorer, by adding a few sentences, has endeavoured to join into one. Adolf Ebert sees in the Exodus no interpolation. J. Strobl argued that it consists of separate songs with interpolations.

If the first volume of the book now in the reader's hand were submitted to the same form of disjunctive analysis, what could be more certain than that the Introduction and the other matter of the first volume could not have been from the same writer; the Introduction being a separate work, wholly different in point of view and in style, which has been joined to the other part of the volume by an interpolator, A, who has introduced a few connecting passages which are easily to be distinguished from the original text. In the other part of the book no one with any pretension to scholarship could fail to separate the groundwork, which is that of a dull chronicler and compiler of facts, from the interpolator A, who inserted various prose digests of some of the books of which the first writer had so inartistically compiled the record. Then followed an interpolator B, who turned some parts of the prose descriptions of poems, and sometimes whole poems, into a bald metrical form, wholly without traces of original invention. But after this the work thus constituted by the union of parts originally distinct was revised by another interpolator, C, whose interpolations were of verses altogether

* "Das angelsächsische Gedicht 'Crist und Satan.' Inaugural dissertation zur Erlangung der philos. Doktorwürde zu Leipzig" (Halle, 1883).

written by himself. In these verses, however, there are clear differences in style which make it evident that two at least were engaged in writing them. Thus, in the verses interpolated after the Introduction are forms and words "pregnant oil," "falter," "searchers," used nowhere else throughout the volume. For the prose of the book, nothing can be more obvious than the wide distinction between the work of the bald chronicler of facts and that of two other writers, both of them commentators, between whom a broad distinction may be made. One of them is known by his continuous use of short and simple sentences; while the sentences of the other are made intricate with secondary clauses. And so forth, with innumerable splittings of each thin hair of opinion.

But if we feel a weakness in this method of criticism we feel also the real strength of the critics whose work upon our old English Literature has to be so continually cited. No student of English can think slightly of the large body of faithful labour in minute research, accumulating daily sound material towards the building up of knowledge, for which he is indebted to his German kinsmen. "Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house." Let it be gratefully remembered that in work of this kind they have done far more than we. Müllenhoff, Ettmüller, Leo, Bouterwek, Grein, Heyne, Wülcker, Sievers, Ten Brink, Ebert, and a dozen more, are names honoured in England wherever English is well studied.

CHAPTER V.

TO THE DEATH OF BEDE.

PUT books aside, and come abroad into the sun of the meadows and shade of the woods—climb the round hill-side where the harebell waves in the land-breeze on the smooth slippery turf by the sea—look far out over the glitter of waters on which swim ghostly leviathans, the great cloud-shadows; come and, for this true, great life of nature, put away dulness of books! Books and the World.

To many a close student that is the summer-call of some fond household voice; but he has not yet learnt to read who goes, as from death to life, out of a bookroom into the bright, busy world. It is well for the young student when he is allowed leisure and freedom to feel even those books of which he is required in days of pupilage to know the contents. For he profits more who has been near to the true mind of another, though he may remember not a tithe of all that other may have told him, than he who has forced every communicated fact into his head, crushing its life out in the act of violence, and so may have turned his brain into a sepulchre of all the sciences. The right reader has only a completer sense than they who do not read, of that great life of nature from which books are too often considered—even by those who love them, but who love them best for accidents of age, or size, or binding—something separate. As to their material form, books are excellent in proportion as they bring the writer's exact mind home to the reader with as little as may be of mechanical friction in

the means employed for its conveyance. As the writer himself should seek only the simplest words and clearest sentences for the precise conveyance of his thoughts with the least possible diversion of attention to the form of language that expresses them, so in the mechanical form of a book, whatever obstructs precision and ease of delivery by calling attention from the thought expressed to the pound of paper through which it is spoken, is a fault. The right student profits by familiarity with many forms of print, paper, and language, in becoming less and less conscious of the mechanism through which he gets at truth. The material veil becomes for him thinner and thinner, and his books are for him more and more, when he reads them, disembodied souls. But what are these less than the chief of all the varied forms of life on earth? They are as real a part of nature as the meadows and the woods, the harebells on the hillside, or the cloud-shadows that float upon the great broad sea,—so real a part that none have felt them who have not felt through them a fuller, nobler, happier sense of the glory and the beauty in the whole round of God's world. It was but a phrase to say "God made the country, and man made the town." Let us feel, apart from our own kind, the universal harmony that makes the souls of men yearn with strange sympathy, as in the calm of the forest large thoughts are awakened even by the chirp and flutter of the birds, the click of insects, and the rustle of the wind among the leaves that joins to the swelling sense of God-made earth the murmur as of a great sea. But the town is a forest too—a forest of men, who had the same Maker as the trees, who were made also to a noble pattern and for greater ends. The cry and flutter of souls are heard there for the cry of birds—of souls in their deep human love and their deep human suffering. The growth in that great forest is, as in the green wood beyond it, by the breath of all surrounding influences; and that is not

more surely a process of nature by which the first tender leaves out of the acorn break through the hard ground than the force whereby the spirit of man presses, among the stones, up from the hard earth heavenward. The town, that forest of men, is but one form more of the manifold creation bound together by innumerable harmonies. And the fruitage of that nobler forest is stored in our books. Nay, may we not rather say that a well-chosen library is of all forests in nature the one most beautiful in itself, and in truest harmony with every sight and sound of life; a forest of men's souls? Whether we pass, then, from the books to the fresh breeze upon the hills, or out of the wood into the meadow, it is but the same act of passing from one form of nature to another.

The Anglo-Saxon Bookmen.

And as we proceed now with this sketch of the growth of a great people, from age to age, in the stir of its best minds, each labouring in more or less accordance with the common mind of its own day; and as we come into the company of men long dead, who were active workers in the world—although the best of them laboured as if buried alive in a monastic library—let us endeavour to know how their busy life allied itself to all that was fresh, real, and hopeful in God's universe, and send our hearts back to them with our memories. Theirs was a time when there was yet no prose literature in the language of the people. Reading was a power of the learned; but the common literature of the people was preserved and spread traditionally by oral recitation, and by act of memory. Success in oral delivery was best attained by help of musical accompaniment to words pleasantly attuned; and, for a literature that was to live chiefly in the memory, the metrical form—with its artificial aids—was far fitter than prose. It is for such reasons that the earliest remains of the literature of any people are almost invariably metrical.

Metrical Anglo-Saxon.

But if the people when feasting their bodies gratified their minds also with oral literature, now designed by their teachers to be furthermore wholesome to their souls, the teachers themselves were at the same time seeking of each other help towards their own enlightenment, and could learn little more than the elements of knowledge orally. The studious monk in England sought for his use all spiritual and intellectual help Rome or the East could send; and the community of religious students, who were then the chief teachers of Europe, laborious men scattered thinly among the half-civilised multitude in many lands, and speaking many native languages, aided each other, taught their immediate pupils, and maintained for a time the best life of their own countries and of Europe in a great exchange of knowledge for all nations, by the use of Latin as the common speech of their republic. In England, then, both in and after Cædmon's time, while there is no prose literature in the language of the people, the religious scholars who are the chief, almost the sole exponents of the English mind, adopt the common language of the learned, and in that give full expression to the spirit of their race. They are English studies, English aspirations that we follow through the Latin literature of the First-English monasteries, from Aldhelm onward. The accident that use is made of a conventional language leaves the native character unchanged.

Latin Prose.

And again I urge, for it cannot be too distinctly felt, that in dating back to the earliest, and tracing step by step from its origin a nation's path of thought, the proper motive is no taste for the mere dryness of a study of antiquities. The old facts that concern us are not old dead twigs and branches of the tree of knowledge, but the old main stem, and the first branches from it, whence more branches have sprung that now lie hidden under the rich leafage of the present. Our Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton

will be understood the better if we see how the sap rises from the root by which their genius was fed. We have seen in Cædmon one green shoot from the sap that is mounting Miltonward. We shall see hereafter other forms of literature breaking into life among the monks. But in this present chapter we shall especially find them cherishing, in the studious leisure of their monasteries, that taste for allegory and enigma which influenced most strongly the whole early literature of this country—as of all Europe, monastery-taught—vigorous in the "Vision of Piers Plowman;" touching Chaucer in the "Romaunt of the Rose;" displayed in Stephen Hawes's "Passetyme of Pleasure," or in Dunbar's "Golden Targe;" and perfected among us by Spenser in the "Faerie Queene."

There was in the seventh century a strong Italian influence upon English church literature, maintained by the zeal with which the Bishop of Rome laboured, through emissaries and otherwise, to conquer the disposition of the native British Church to connect Christianity with outward signs of adhesion—in time of Easter-keeping, form of Ordination, Marriage-service, re-baptism of heretics, tonsure, and otherwise—to the discipline of churches of the East. After a brisk contest, sustained through more than a single generation, England was so far annexed to the spiritual dominion of the West that not only the English priests who were warm in the Roman cause made frequent journeys to Rome for instruction of all kinds, but the whole Church was agreed to hold its spiritual power from the bishop who, by right of direct succession in the laying on of hands, was regarded as the apostolical successor of St. Peter. The spiritual power was used to enlarge, with good intent, the temporal strength of the Church; and against the consequent encroachment on their rights temporal chiefs in this country were at a very early date to be found in resistance. The conflict which

Italian influence upon the literature of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

exercised afterwards so strong an influence upon the English mind and literature began very early. Meanwhile grants of land to the churches made the chiefs in the Church rich. They built great abbeys and monasteries; they went to Rome and Gaul in search of precious manuscripts, which they could there buy or cause to be copied, and supplied the studious monks at home with writings of the Fathers of the Church, on which they could employ the leisure left them by their frequently recurring exercises of devotion. That they might read the Scriptures and the expositions of them by the Fathers, pupils of the monks and nuns, and the monks and the nuns themselves, were diligently grounded and confirmed in the knowledge of Latin; and, when possible, also of Greek and Hebrew. But Hebrew was a rare accomplishment, and for those who did not advance to Greek, the best works of several of the Greek Fathers had been translated into Latin.

Origin of the early Allegorical Literature.

It was from their study among the writings of the Fathers of the Church, while they were devoting all their own wit to religious ends, that the old scholars of the monasteries drew the taste for learned puzzles, allegorical incidents in lives of saints, edifying applications and interpretations of all things, and the translation of plain facts of Scripture into elaborate allegory, out of which arose a very strong influence upon the literature of Italy herself and of all Europe.

The English mind in all.

But we shall still find the religious practical mind under these apparently trivial exercises of English wit. The lightest of them are spent in the effort to enliven the path of the pupil, when he is not being enlivened by the rod, in his study of Latin; and the gravest, except when the battle is fought for Rome on the question of celebration of Easter, dwell almost exclusively upon the essentials of Christian life. We shall find also the most energetic of those pious English monks joining to all his

labours for the advancement of religious life an indefatigable effort to bring the best fruits of the learning of the East and West, and the pith of good literature extracted by his own toil from a costly library, together with the knowledge gained by widely-extended personal inquiries, within compass of a few volumes that even private scholars might afford to have transcribed for their own use. We still see also in the early Anglo-Latin as in the Anglo-Saxon literature, an imagination powerful to seize upon, and present with vivid truth to itself and others, worthy conceptions of what was most real to it in life and religion; but even in its lighter recreations more suited to fit and full expression of a thought than to gay decoration of its surface. The course of the narrative must now show whether these general considerations rightly represent the life of the English mind as it was expressed in Latin by the first five or six generations of First-English monks.

Theodore of Tarsus.

Adrian.

Theodore of Tarsus, who came into England in the latter half of the seventh century, and became Archbishop of Canterbury, was widely famous for his literary knowledge and his skill in Greek and Latin. He and his friend Abbot Adrian, African-born, whom William of Malmesbury celebrated as "fountain of letters and river of arts," were honoured as the first great teachers of the arts and sciences, and of the languages of Rome and Greece to the youth of Britain. One of the pupils of Adrian became more famous than his master, as Aldhelm of Malmesbury.

Aldhelm, a poet and divine, and the churchman Wilfrid, celebrated by the earliest of our biographers, lived in the days of Cædmon; and they both died in the year 709. But when Wilfrid died he was an old man of seventy-five, whose restless energy had made him conspicuous in early manhood.

Wilfrid, born in the year 634, was of about Cædmon's

age—that is, he was forty-five years old when Cædmon, "well advanced in years," entered Abbess Hilda's monastery.

Wilfrid.

He was a noble of Bryneich (Bernicia), whom the harshness of a stepmother had driven from home at the age of fourteen. He then entered the household of Queen Eanfleda, who appointed him, since he was a pious youth, to attend on an old noble, named Cadda, then about to direct one of the monasteries of Lindisfarne. As Wilfrid learnt at Lindisfarne the Celtic or eastern views of church discipline, Eanfleda sent him, by his own wish, at the age of nineteen, to her brother Earconbert, King of Kent, who shipped him to Rome in company with another noble youth. His companion was the same Benedict Biscop who afterwards founded Bede's Jarrow monastery. On his way home he was present at the murder of a Count Dalfinus, who was his host at Lyons. "Who," asked the assassins, "is that fair youth who is making himself ready for death?" They were told, "A Saxon from Britain," and said "Let him go—do not touch him." After his return to England, fully indoctrinated in the Roman discipline, Wilfrid, A.D. 661, received from King Alcfrid the monastery founded at Ripon by priests of the Culdee school, whom Alcfrid, a hot Romanist, had expelled for their antagonism to the Roman notions of church discipline. Three years afterwards Wilfrid was ordained a priest in the monastery by Agilbert, a foreigner, Bishop of the West Saxons. This was in the year (664) of the conference held at Whitby for settlement of the questions of discipline between the Culdee and the Roman teachers. Wilfrid and Agilbert spoke at that conference for the Roman usage; Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and Abbess Hilda for the Celtic. The two kings, Oswin and Alcfrid, presided, and Alcfrid broke up the conference by declaring, "As St. Peter keeps the keys and is greater in heaven than your Columbkil, I shall follow the precepts of Peter, lest coming to heaven-

gate St. Peter should deny me a cast of his office, and refuse to let me into happiness." Colman resigned his bishopric, which was then given to Tuda, a Culdee, who consented to the Roman time of keeping Easter, and the Roman view of all other disputed points. Tuda died in a few months by pestilence; and to secure better spiritual care of Northumbria, Wilfrid was then appointed to the vacant see of York. Wilfrid went to Gaul for canonical ordination; because there was then only one bishop in England canonically ordained. He was consecrated with great pomp at Compiègne, and chaired by a dozen bishops in a golden chair. He was away three years, and during his absence the party of the British church so far prevailed that the see of York was given away from him to Chad, a disciple of Aldan, beloved everywhere for his humble piety. Wilfrid's vessel also, when he returned, was stranded on the coast of Sussex, and claimed by the Pagan wreckers as gift of the sea, its goods for their goods, its men for their slaves. The crew fought for themselves and their ship, till by good fortune the tide rose high enough to float them. Wilfrid retired then to his monastery of Ripon. The influence of Theodore, as Archbishop of Canterbury, established in 669 the Roman rule accepted by the south of England. Canterbury conquered York; and the gentle St. Chad, submitting to deposition as one uncanonically ordained by British bishops, received for his obedience Roman consecration to the bishopric of Lichfield. Thus Wilfrid after all became Archbishop of York. He spent magnificently his revenues in church architecture—brought to the church out of Gaul glass for the windows, so that the dirty birds could no longer fly in and out,* repaired it, adorned it, roofed it

* Says Eddius :—"Nam culmina antiquata tecti distillantia, fenestræque apertæ, avibus nidificantibus intro et foras volitantibus, et parietes incultæ, omni spurcitia imbrium et avium, horribiles manebant."

with lead, obtained much admiration also for the new church that he built at Ripon. The glory of this was surpassed, however, by the triumph of his architectural taste at Hexham, where the church he built was thought to be the finest on this side the Alps. Wilfrid, rich as a king, and riding abroad with a retinue dressed and armed as a king's following, also brought his church into collision with King Ecgfrid, who resolved, therefore, with Theodore's consent, if not on Theodore's active suggestion, to cut the see of York into three pieces. The division was so made as to exclude Wilfrid himself altogether. He then rambled to Rome, was well received by the Pope, came home, and fared no better for that in his struggle with the Northumbrian king, whose first wife he is said to have persuaded from her husband's side into a nunnery. His Papal bulls were taken away from him, and he was imprisoned for a few months by the Northumbrian king in evidence of contempt for Papal orders. Theodore, too, was still opposing him. Then Wilfrid spent his energies in preaching to those savage Pagans of the Sussex coast who lived under an independent chief of their own, and with whom he had fought when they attacked his stranded vessel. These people had no missionaries among them, except one poor monk, named Dicuil, of the faithful and devoted church of the Culdees, who lived with five or six brethren at Bosham, near Chichester, between the forest and the sea. Wilfrid fastened upon the heathens with his restless energy, reconverted the king and queen of these people, who had already been once baptised, received from them a grant of Selsea Bill, on which he built a monastery, and thus is said to have converted Sussex, afterwards also the Isle of Wight, when it was conquered by Caedwalla, King of Wessex, whom as a young exile in Sussex Wilfrid had protected. One fourth of the Isle of Wight was given by Caedwalla to the Church. Theodore, now more than fourscore years of age, could not

refuse to recognise the rare vigour of Wilfrid's character, which had been thus brought home to his own doors, and Wilfrid was, in 686, recalled to York. But although the crown of King Ecgfrid, killed in battle with the Picts, had fallen to King Aldfrid, celebrated for his piety and learning, still the old disputes arose. Caedwalla might give away a fourth part of the Isle of Wight, but the blood of the Northumbrian was hot against extravagant claims of domain for the Roman Church, and resisted the pretensions of Rome to dominion over him in everything that a priest could distort into a point of ecclesiastical discipline. The Anglo-Saxon clergy themselves, though the Roman Church discipline now prevailed among them, and their spiritual loyalty to Rome was strong, were strong also, even at that early time, in resistance to all the Pope's claims for dominion in England as a foreign prince. Wilfrid was deposed by an assembly of the English prelates. Again, therefore, Wilfrid, growing old, toiled off to Rome; he was absent for ten years or more, was dangerously sick on his way home, but returned armed with the Pope's letters, at the age of seventy. He was again shut out of Northumbria, and was at no time restored to York; but he received, through the subsequent course of events, Ripon and Hexham. Peace was made for a while with the English Church, and Wilfrid not long afterwards (A.D. 709) died, on a progress through his diocese of Ripon, at the monastery of Oundle, to which, says Eddi, or Eddius Stephanus, his friend and biographer, he "crept rather than journeyed."

Of the friend, Eddius Stephanus, the earliest of our biographers, who wrote the interesting life of Wilfrid,* which is the chief source of these details, little is known. He told much of his friend, but nothing of himself. Bede says that Wilfrid invited him from Kent

Eddius, the first English biographer.

* One MS. of it is in the Cotton Collection, Vespasian, D, vi.

to teach in Northumbria the Gregorian method of chanting, which, with the graces of church architecture, formed part of the Benedictine rule, that had in Wilfrid its most zealous supporter. Eddius, who is called also Wilfrid's chaplain, wrote at the request of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, and Tathbercht, his narrative of Wilfrid's life, which was thus made the subject of the first independent piece of genuine biography in our literature.* Wilfrid was sketched by Bede in his history, but he was the subject also of several other early biographies. One is a version of Eddius into hexameters, made in the tenth century by Fredegodus, a monk of Dover, at the request of Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury. Another is the life of Wilfrid compiled from the existing narratives, in the beginning of the twelfth century, by Eadmer, chaplain of Archbishop Anselm.

From the first biographer we pass to our first autobiographer, who might, however, possibly be otherwise ranked with greater truth as the first English artist in prose fiction.

Egwin, the first English autobiographer; or author of Prose Fiction.

Egwin of Worcester, allied to the royal house of Mercia was, at the close of the seventh century, a favourite counsellor of King Ethelred, by whom he was made, about the year 692, Bishop of Worcester. His severe conduct in his bishopric caused him to be accused at Rome, and, with exemplary humility, he set out thither to defend himself, travelling the whole way with fetters locked on his bare legs. Why did

* From the MS. in the Cotton Collection, copied for him by Dean Gale, Mabillon first printed the work. It will be found in the "Acta Sanctorum" of the Bollandists. There are good sketches of Wilfrid in Mr. Thomas Wright's "Biographica Brit. Lit.," Anglo-Saxon period, and in the first volume of the "Fasti Eboracenses. Lives of the Archbishops of York. By the Rev. W. H. Dixon, M.A., Canon Residentiary of York, &c. Edited and enlarged by the Rev. James Raine, M.A., Secretary of the Surtees Society" (London, 1863).

he so? This was the first evidence he gave of his inventive genius. When the fetters were locked on him he publicly threw the key into the Avon. Duplicate keys have been heard of; but Egwin himself testified that, after he reached Rome, the key found by his cook in the belly of a fish in the Tiber—a middling sized salmon, caught or bought for him by his companions—was that thrown by him into the English river. It could only have been so miraculously sent to him for his deliverance from bonds. The miracle was too good to be wasted by the Church, and the sinner was received by virtue of it as a saint. "Who," says his biographer, the prior Dominic, "did not struggle to see him?—who did not make haste to be blessed by him?" Egwin came home with such letters that he was not only restored to his see, but also made tutor to King Ethelred's children. Ethelred also gave him, on the spot where the key was cast into the Avon, the forest land kept by four swineherds, brothers Eoves and Ympa, and brothers Trottuc and Cornuc, of whom the chief, named Eoves, is said to have lived where Egwin built in 703 the monastery of Eoves-home or Evesham. Eoves had told him that in hunting for a sow he came in the wood upon a vision of three divine ladies—one with a book in her hand, the other two engaged with her in singing psalms. Egwin, visiting barefoot with psalm and prayer the spot where the wonder occurred to Eoves, beheld the same vision of the Virgin and two Angels. He then dedicated the place to God and the Virgin; and Dominic significantly adds (for here is the key to the new fiction), "With many possessions begged from the kings of England he endowed this spot." This he himself tells; for he wrote a history of the Foundation of Evesham, and also a Book of Visions, which, although they do not remain as substantive works, furnish the substance of a life of Egwin extant in a MS. of the tenth century.*

* MS. Cotton, Nero, E, i.; this unprinted MS., of the tenth or

Having finished his monastery, Egwin went to Rome to get a charter for it, on his return solemnly consecrated the church, and having resigned his see, spent in it the remainder of his days, much favoured with visions. He died in or before the year 720. Four hundred years afterwards it was said that because the smiths at Alcester had tried to drown the sound of Egwin's preaching with the beating of their hammers, therefore ever since, and until that day, no smith could ever ply his trade properly at Alcester, or get a living there.

The humour of pious fraud in Egwin was too gross and self-seeking. We leave him gladly, and before dwelling upon Aldhelm, the first writer of great mark in the Anglo-Saxon church, look northward to Iona for the beginner in another branch of literature, Adámnan, the writer of our most ancient book of travel, and to Willibald, first English narrator of travels of his own.

Adámnan, the fourth Abbot of Iona since Columba's

eleventh century, is ascribed by a heading in a modern hand to one Brithwald. Another MS. life of St. Egwin opens the "Chronicon Abbatiæ de Evesham, ad annum 1418," edited in 1863 by Mr. William Dunn Macray, Assistant in the Bodleian, in the invaluable series of "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages," published by Government, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. The "Life and Miracles of St. Egwin," prefixed to this "Chronicle of Evesham," were written at large by Prior Dominic, who is incidentally mentioned in the Chronicle of Florence of Worcester as having been Prior at Evesham in the year 1125. Prior Dominic's tediousness was abridged by Abbot Thomas of Marlborough (or de Marleberge), whom we shall hereafter meet with as the hero and chronicler of Evesham, and who died in the year 1236. Another life of Egwin is in the Bodleian, MS. Digby, 112, pp. 58-66. The unique MS. of the abridgment of Dominic's Life of Egwin and Marlborough's Chronicle is part of a large collection bequeathed to the Bodleian by Dr. Richard Rawlinson (Rawlinson, A. 287); and is a noble folio of 194 vellum leaves clearly written in double columns by the hand of Abbot Marlborough himself.

death, was in Northumbria at the beginning of the eighth century, and was there converted by Bede's abbot Ceolfrid to the Romish calculation of Easter and the Roman tonsure. When he returned to Iona his monks refused to conform to his new views, and he passed on to the Gaels of Ireland, among whom he did succeed in spreading them. Nevertheless, when he came back to Iona his monks held to their British discipline, and he died in the year 704, before the question could arise whether he should keep Easter at one time and his monks at another. While at Iona Adámnan received as a guest a Frankish bishop, Arculf, who, after visiting Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Constantinople, and seeing a volcanic eruption off the coast of Sicily, had suffered shipwreck on the western coast of Britain. Many things the pious Adámnan heard from his guest about the Holy Land, that he had visited soon after it fell into the hands of the Arabs, and what he heard he wrote in a traveller's book, "De Situ Terræ Sanctæ," which he took, in or about the year 701, as a present to the Northumbrian King Aldfrid, who caused copies to be made for the use of his subjects. The narrative, reduced to the form of treatise, or a pilgrim's guide, is divided into three books, the first containing Arculf's account of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood; the second treating of the rest of the Holy Land, with Egypt and the Nile; the third describing the chief sacred objects seen at Constantinople and the traveller's return. Adámnan wrote also a legendary life of St. Columba, founder of his monastery. *

Adámnan, author of our first Book of Travel.

* Adámnan's "Travels of Arculf" were printed in 1672, in Mabillon's "Acts of the Benedictine Saints," and previously, in a small quarto, at Ingolstadt in 1619. But I follow here Thomas Wright's "Biog. Brit. Lit.," and his edition in Bohn's Antiquarian Library, of "Early Travels in Palestine, comprising the narratives of Arculf, Willibald, Bernard, Sæwulf, Sigurd, Benjamin of Tudela, Sir John Maundeville, De la Brocquière, and Maundrell" (London, 1848).

Willibald, a West-Saxon of noble birth, with his father Richard, his brother Wunibald, and his sister, famous afterwards as Saint Walpurgis, left England, probably A. D. 718, and travelled over the land of the Franks to Rome. The father died at Lucca, and the children all got fever at Rome. When they recovered, Willibald, then only about twenty-one years old, resolved, with his brother and sister, about the year 721, to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a journey to which the account of Arculf's travels had given additional attraction among Anglo-Saxons. They went on their way, and learnt as they went that when there is an eruption of Etna the inhabitants of Catania show to the mountain the veil of St. Agatha, whereupon immediately the eruption ceases. At Emessa, their party having increased to the number of eight, they were imprisoned for a time by the Saracens, but, suffered at last to go free, proceeded on their journey to the Holy Places. At the end of two years they sailed on their return from Tyre. Afterwards, at the age of forty, Willibald became Bishop of Eichstadt, and the short extant account of his travels was taken down from the bishop's own lips by a nun of Heidenheim, who was his kinswoman.

Willibald.

We are now free to speak of Aldhelm, poet and divine. He was said also to have been a king's nephew, son of a devout Kenten, brother of Ina, King of Wessex; but William of Malmesbury repeats King Alfred's note upon this, that Ina had only one brother, whose name was Ingild. Aldhelm was well born, with original gifts and a most retentive memory. He completed in Kent his studies of Latin and Greek under the care of the learned Adrian, who came to England in the year 670, and became, while yet in his youth, a monk of Malmesbury; a monastery so slenderly endowed by its founder, a learned Scot, Meldun or Maildulph—whence Meldum's byrig, Malmesbury—that the brethren scarcely had enough to eat. Aldhelm, how-

Aldhelm.

ever, if not a king's nephew, was of noble birth as well as a man of learning, eloquence, and piety. He obtained a grant of the monastery from the bishop in the year 672, rebuilt the church, and gathered to himself companions from all sides. Aldhelm was an expert musician, playing all the instruments used in his time; and as an English poet, whose native songs were popular in King Alfred's day (but of whom only the Latin verse remains), he lived and sang at the same time as Cædmon, being then, however, a young man of the next generation.

When the people would not come to church for sacred teaching, the clever abbot, simply shrewd, would tempt them with secular eloquence, and on one Sabbath day, when a great crowd of traders from different parts of the country came into Malmesbury, the abbot stationed himself on the bridge outside the town, where he caused some of those who would have passed to stay by him, and leaving their trade until the morrow, follow him into the church. William of Malmesbury, in his life of Aldhelm,* gives on the authority of King Alfred another version of this incident, or a similar incident. He says that Aldhelm was unequalled as an inventor and singer of English verse, and that a song ascribed to him, which was still familiar among the people, had been sung by Aldhelm on the bridge between country and town, in the character of a gleeman, to keep the people from running home directly after mass was sung, as it was their habit to do, without waiting for the sermon. They stopped as he sang, to listen for their pleasure, and he then so blended words of Scripture with his jesting that he brought health to their minds, when he could have done nothing if he had thought to manage them severely and by excommunication.

Aldhelm visited Pope Sergius at Rome, and obtained

* The other authority is the "Life of St. Aldhelm," by Faricius.

all the privileges and immunities the Pope could give, which were then confirmed by King Ina, for his monastery at Malmesbury, and for two others which he had built, one on the Frome dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and the other at Bradford, which was afterwards demolished by the Danes. Some time after his return Aldhelm wrote, in the year 706, a tract in support of the Roman time of keeping Easter, against what Rome called the heresy of the Britons. His piety is said to have been so great that once, when beams were being lifted during the rebuilding of the church at Malmesbury, one beam, although cut to the same length as the others, was found to have become miraculously shorter, and was a misfit. The workmen went to Aldhelm, who told them to trust in the power of the Virgin and to go on hauling. They did so, and before it was quite lifted to its place the beam was found to be too long. Here it may very well be that, among men eager to recognise the supernatural, a miracle was produced in all good faith out of a twofold miscalculation.

Hedda, the fifth Bishop of the West Saxons, died in the year 705, and the bishopric was then divided into the two sees of Winchester and Sherborne, Aldhelm being elected by the primates, clergy, and people the first Bishop of Sherborne, with a diocese including the present counties of Dorset, Somerset, Wilts, Devon, and Cornwall.* He held the bishopric only four years, and died May 25, 709, at Dunting, while upon a circuit of instruction through his diocese. Aldhelm is said by tradition, when at Malmesbury, to have spent even winter nights up to his shoulders in a spring of cold water, reciting the Psalter. The spring was still called by his name in the time of the narrator.†

* The see was removed three centuries afterwards to Wilton, then to Old Sarum, and lastly to New Sarum, or Salisbury.

† Capgrave, in "Legenda Nova Angliæ."

The chief prose work of Aldhelm, from whom we have only what he wrote in Latin, was a treatise in praise of Virginity, dedicated to the sisterhood of Barking, a company of women vowed to single life, which was joined by Cuthburga, one of King Ina's sisters, after the dissolution of her brief marriage with Aldfrid, King of the Northumbrians. Cuthburga is said by William of Malmesbury to have been induced to go to Barking by the reading of Aldhelm's treatise in praise of Virginity; but her name is included among those of sisters specially addressed in its dedication. The chief poem of Aldhelm, in Latin hexameters, sets forth the same subject in verse. For at the end of the prose celebration he had said that, as he had tried to honour the glory of his subject in rhetorical narrative, so also if he lived he would try to celebrate it in verse also, "and the rhetorical foundations being as it were already laid and the prose walls constructed, he would roof it with dactylic and trochaic tiles." Aldhelm wrote also to Acircius, a governor in the north, a book entitled "De Septenario, de Metris, Ænigmatibus ac Pedum Regulis," first citing the numerous examples of the Scriptural use of the number Seven; adding to this a small treatise on Latin Prosody, which passes into the form of a dialogue between pupil and teacher; and then presenting to the pupil in Latin hexameter a collection of enigmas, which he is asked to solve and scan. They are introduced by a prologue forming an acrostic both with the initial and final letters of its successive lines, "Aldhelmus cecinit Millenis Versibus Odas"—Aldhelm sang the Poems in a Thousand Lines. About 760 of the lines remain. These enigmas are arranged, according to their length, in sections; the first section containing those of four lines, the next those of five, then "hexasticha," and so steadily on to the sixteen-lined poems, omitting only the fourteen-lined. Upon these follows a polystich in eighty lines or more. Aldhelm

Aldhelm's Latin Works.

imitates professedly the example of the enigmas of Cœlius Firmianus Symposius, a Latin poet of the fourth century, whose verses are sometimes attributed to Cœcilius Firmianus Lactantius, "the Christian Cicero." Lactantius lived at the close of the third and early in the fourth century, and he wrote, while a student of rhetoric at Sicca, in Africa, a lost book entitled "Symposium, or the Banquet," to which this collection of a hundred enigmas with a prologue no doubt belonged, and from which they have been separately transcribed under their name of "Ænigmata Symposii." These enigmas of Symposius, or of the Symposium, are three-lined triplets. Aldhelm begins, therefore, with the four-lined

In Aldhelm's enigmas is abundant evidence of the priest's pleasant ingenuity. They represent part of his secular amusement, and bear witness to the delight in nature that was part of his poetical instinct; for they nearly all relate to the life of the world. One of the four-lined enigmas, not written for Barking, raises a perplexity of eyes and fingers; and the answer to it is Mother of Twins. The subject was tempting. There is also an enneastich "de scrofâ prægnante." Among the enigmas upon natural objects—earth, wind, fire, cloud, Nature herself, the elements, rainbow, moon, salt, heliotrope, silkworms, the peacock, salamander, bee, ostrich, dove, fish, locust, bat, the born blind, cat, beaver, swallow, crow, unicorn, and the long final polystich on all creation—a few works of art are included as subjects representing, it may be said, man in nature, such as the organ, the lighthouse, the library shelf, the writer's pen. That on the pen* may be read thus, in

* '*De Penna Scriptoria.*

"Me pridem genuit candens onocrotalus albam,
Gutture qui patulo sorbet de gurgite lymphas.
Pergo per albentes directo tramite campos,

an inevitably uncouth literal imitation of its sense and form.

"Me, dead-white, long ago the shining pelican brought forth,
Who with an open throat from the pit's depth sup up the waters.
Through the white plains I march, without any crook in the footpath,
And on the bright white way I leave my cerulean footprints,
Darkening ustrous fields with the blackness of twisting and turning.
Nor does it yet suffice that the plains are traversed by one track,
But to a thousand paths is rather the byway extended,
Which them who do not stray has led to the summits of heaven."

After the enigmas the dialogue is resumed, and, in reply to the questions of Discipulus, Magister tells of the rules governing the feet of Latin metres; and the discourse, therefore, is now of trochee, tribrach, molossus, anapæst, and so forth, closing with a final section upon Prosody in general. Thus Aldhelm sought to diffuse the knowledge acquired from his old master Adrian, and even women who devoted themselves to religious study have left traces—as did the Abbess Eadburga and her pupil Leobwitha—of their skill in Latin prose and verse. Without the learned tongues how were the Scriptures and the Fathers to be read?

In addition to the works already named there remain also fourteen of Aldhelm's letters in Latin prose and a few Latin poems besides that which he wrote in celebration of all famous virgins, which greater work contains about 2,500 lines. The subjects of the chief of Aldhelm's lesser poems are "The Eight Principal Sins," but this work is perhaps a part of the poem on Virgins, as it treats of the eight vices obnoxious to chastity. This on the Eight Sins is a poem in more than 450 lines. Aldhelm wrote also a Latin poem on a church built at Bugge, by the daughter of King

Candentique via vestigia cærula linquo,
Lucida nigratis fuscans anfractibus arva.
Nec satis est unum per campos pandere callem
Semita quin potius milleno tramite tendit,
Quæ non errantes ad cæli culmina vexit."

Kentwin (eighty-six lines of hexameter); a poem on the Altars dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the twelve Apostles (a chain of thirteen short poems, to which is added a fourteenth in honour of Matthew, one of the seventy who took the place of Judas Iscariot). A poem of one and twenty lines was written on occasion of Aldhelm's entering into the church of the Apostles at Rome. There is a fragment, also, a hundred lines long, upon the Day of Judgment. Aldhelm's hexameters frequently graft on the Latin metre more or less of the Anglo-Saxon habit of alliteration, and in four poems he forsakes hexameter for short unrhymed alliterative lines, partly upon the Teutonic model.* These are inscribed "From an unknown brother to an unknown sister." One describes a storm and its passing, while all show an enjoyment of nature and a strain to bring the sense and the alliteration into proper harmony.

The same MS. which contains Aldhelm's "Praise of Virginity" and "Eight Principal Vices" has also preceding them "Christian Monostiches," wise thoughts expressed proverbially in single hexameters, by an unknown author, whom Delrio,† I think rightly, believed to be also Aldhelm. Delrio partly grounded his opinion on the peculiar reference in one of the lines (Octenas studeas vitiorum vincere turmas"—study to vanquish the eight troops of the vices) to the eight vices which Aldhelm, in view of his favourite

* Thus—

"Atque responsi reddidi Et fecundis graminibus
Quando profectus fueram Atque facta informia
Per Carentem cornubiam. Convexa cœli camera
Sub ventorum monarchia."

† "S. Aldhelmi Prisci Occidentalium Saxonum Episcopi Poetica Nonnulla. E vetere Manuscripto per R. P. Martinum Delrio, Soc. Jesu Presb., exscripta cum nonnullis ejusdem notulis" (Mayence, 1601). The MS. here used was then in the Abbey of St. Lawrence at Lüttich. There are MSS. of works of Aldhelm in Paris, the Bodleian, and elsewhere.

topic, substituted for the seven sins of other teachers. I give the sense of a few of these lines :—"Virtue is a great spell against demons. The reins of the tongue are fastened in the heart. Eyes are of no use to the blindly-minded. Happy he who learns through the whipping got by another. Keep your new friend and your wine till they are old. Enslave your mind to no malignant luxuries. The much talker strips his mind of its real merits. If you would be great, be moderate."*

Aldhelm's letters are less interesting than those of Boniface, whose extant correspondence sketches vividly some features of their time. Boniface, "the apostle of Germany," was a Devonshire man, named Winifred, and born at Crediton in the year 670. He was ordained priest in England in the year 700, and four years afterwards went as a missionary to the Frisians. He failed, came home in a year, and returned ten years later to remain in Friesland, and the neighbouring parts of Germany. Made bishop by Gregory II., he was an active supporter of the papacy, and in 738 the see of Mayence was made for him an archbishopric. But he deputed his dignities to another that he might continue his missionary work among the Frisian pagans, by whose hands he died in a tumult. He wrote letters in which a strong earnest mind, expressed in rough Latin, is devoted to the interests of the Papal see, and which contain valuable illustrations of his time. About a hundred of them are extant. There are

Boniface.

* The works of Aldhelm, like the letters of Boniface, the works of Bede, Alcuin, &c., are contained together with the oldest biographical accounts of their authors in the extensive series of Migne's "Patrologiæ Cursus Completus." This series is printed in double columns of the largest octavo, in volumes of from 1,100 to 1,500 pages, costing only about seven francs apiece. The whole works of Bede may be obtained in six such volumes. Aldhelm does not fill one. His works are in vol. lxxxix.; together with the letters of Boniface and letters and works of twenty-two other eighth century divines.

ascribed to him also fifteen short Latin sermons, and (in Latin hexameters, with an introduction) nine Enigmas of the Virtues addressed to his sister. An extant life of St. Livinus is perhaps his, and he wrote a treatise, which is lost, on Unity of the Faith.

Bede was at work in his monastery, thirty-six years old, when Aldhelm died, and he was but three years younger than Boniface, being born in, or a few months before or after, the year 673. For he says at the end of his "Ecclesiastical History," writing in 731, that he had "attained his fifty-ninth year." In the same place he further tells of himself that he was born in the territory of the monastery of Peter and Paul at Wearmouth and Jarrow, was given at seven years of age to be educated there by Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, "and," he adds,

Bede.

"Spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture, and amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing. In the nineteenth year of my age I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and by order of the Abbot Ceolfrid, from which time till the fifty-ninth year of my age I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, to compile out of the works of the venerable fathers, and to interpret and explain according to their meaning, these following pieces."

Here he adds the long list of his writings, and appends the final prayer to Jesus that he to whom it has been graciously granted to partake of the words of divine wisdom and knowledge may in fit time come to the presence of Him who is the fountain of all knowledge. In that short sketch of his own life Bede has unconsciously given also a picture of his character.

The associated monasteries of St. Peter and St. Paul, at

Wearmouth and Jarrow, were both founded in Bede's childhood. The ground on which they were erected, near the mouths of Tyne and Wear, had been granted by King Ecgfrid — the first Northumbrian king under whom Deira and Bernicia were united in one monarchy—to the Abbot Benedict, who, under the lay name of Biscop, had been one of his thanes. This Anglo-Saxon noble was a man of cultivated intellect, and as Bede's first guide in life made his name famous in early literature. He travelled in pursuit of knowledge, and having become a monk, still journeyed afar in search of writings and relics. He was the first who, for his building works, brought masons and glaziers across the Channel. He went five times to Rome, and always brought back treasures for the enlarging body of the Wearmouth library, in which Bede lived as the working soul. Visits to Rome, as a fountain-head of piety and learning, were already so far in fashion that many went with a light mood to succumb to the temptations of Italy. Already we hear the cry that afterwards came with so much vigour in the days of Ascham against the spells of the Italian Circe. Boniface said in one of his letters that of those travellers "few remained sound; for there are very few cities in Lombardy among the Franks or Gauls that do not contain an adulteress of English race." Among those who came from Rome with Benedict was the chief singer of St. Peter's at Rome, who, with Pope Agatha's permission, if not by his request, as teacher of the Gregorian chanting, and witness for Rome in England, settled for a time at Wearmouth, where he attracted many from great distances to the religious services. The noble Abbot Benedict set also to all the brethren in his monasteries an example of obedience to rule, himself taking his share of work in threshing and winnowing the corn, in duties of the bake-house, kitchen and garden, and in giving milk to the lambs and calves.

Benedict Biscop.

The Wearmouth monastery of St. Peter's, on the north bank of the river Wear, was the only one built when Bede, at the age of seven, entered it. But when Bede was three years older Abbot Benedict founded the other monastery of St. Paul at Jarrow, on the banks of the Tyne, about five miles distant from St. Peter's. Ceolfrid was appointed its first abbot, and young Bede was among those who removed to the Jarrow monastery, where he earned his name of Venerable. William of Malmesbury quotes a letter from Pope Sergius to Abbot Ceolfrid, asking that Bede might be sent to Rome; but Sergius died in the following year,* and Bede who, it is said, declined to be raised to the dignity of an abbot, because "the office demands household care, and household care brings with it distraction of mind, which hinders the pursuit of learning," was not dragged to the Pope from his book-room.

Bede at Jarrow.

The writings of Bede form a nearly complete encyclopædia of the knowledge of his day. Whatever he could learn from books his mind digested and reproduced in clear and simple Latin, with all the related facts and thoughts neatly arranged and harmonised. He wrote to teach, and with a healthy English mind went always by the plain way to his purpose. We have treatises from him of grammar, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, explanations of leap-year, and of the equinox according to Anatolius, a large body of scripture commentary, histories of saints, and specially both in prose and heroic verse, the life of St. Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne. Cuthbert's memory was dear to the North of England men; for surely, apart from fables of his life, he was, among a rough people, an angelic missionary priest, with a deep sympathy for the neglected poor, whom he

Writings of Bede.

* The letter is also described from Ussher's MSS., by Wilkins, in "Concil. Magn. Brit. et Hibern" (London, 1737), vol. i. pp. 63–4.

would seek in their most craggy and inaccessible homes, to dwell with them by the week or month, their bishop and their brother. Bede's book on Orthography is a short dictionary of certain Latin words, as to the right spelling or right sense of which he specially instructs the learner. "Absconditus, non *absconsus*." "Arbor omne lignum dicitur, *Arbusta* non nisi fructifera." The writing of Latin verse being a common means of recreation or edification in the monasteries, we have from Bede also an ample treatise —"De Arte Metrica"—on Latin prosody. He applied also rhetoric to a study of Scripture in a short book on the Figures of Speech or Schemata (emphatic moulding of the order of words, without a change of sense), and Tropes (or words turned in emphatic speech from their natural sense), used in Scripture. These he classified and named after their kinds, according to the manner of the Greek and Latin rhetoricians, coming to the conclusion that the Scriptures use seventeen forms of figure of speech and thirteen forms of trope.

Into a book on the Nature of Things, that was the Anglo-Saxon text-book of science for many following generations, Bede condensed the knowledge of his day, as modified by religion, on the subject of the World and its Creation, the elements, the firmament and heavens, the five circles of the world (northern, solstitial, equinoctial, brumal, and austral), the four quarters of the heavens, the stars, the course and order of the planets, their apses, their changes of colour, the zodiac and its signs, the milky way, the sun, the moon, their courses and eclipses, comets, air, winds, thunder and lightning, the rainbow, clouds, showers, hail, snow, signs of the weather, pestilence, fresh and salt water, tides, the sea, the Red Sea, the Nile, the position of the earth, its form of a globe, its circle and dial shadows, its movement, volcanic Ætna, and the great geographical divisions of the earth. Each chapter is brief; and the

diligent monk, originating nothing, gives only an enlightened digest of the knowledge of his day. His chapter on weather wisdom doubtless embodies the opinions of the seafaring Anglo-Saxons. It is as follows :—

"*Signs of Storms or of Fine Weather.*

"When the sun rises spotted or concealed with cloud it presages a wet day ; if red, a fine day ; if pale, stormy ; if it seem concave, so that bright in the middle it sends rays to the south and north, there will be moist and windy weather ; when the sun sets pale in black clouds, it foretells wind from the north. Red sky at sunset signifies a fine day ; at sunrise, a stormy day. Lightning from the north and thunder from the south-east portends tempest ; south-wind, heat. If the moon in her quarter be golden red, it foreshows winds ; if blackening with spots on her upper horn, it means a rainy month ; if spotted in the middle, fine weather at the full. Also when in rowing at night the water sparkles on the oars, there will be storm. And when the dolphins often leap out of the water, from the direction towards which they are carried wind will rise ; and in the part whence the clouds are dispersed they open the sky."

Compare with this the speculative chapter

"*On Lightning.*

"Lightning is produced by the rubbing together of clouds, after the manner of flints struck together, the thunder occurring at the same time, but sound reaches the ears more slowly than light the eyes. For of all things the collision creates fire. Some say that while air draws water in vapour from the depths, it draws also fire heat-wise, and by their contact the horrid crash of thunder is produced ; and if the fire conquer, it will be injurious to fruits ; if water, beneficial ; but that the fire of lightning has so much the more penetrative power, from being made of subtler elements than that which is in use by us."

To this concise treatise on cosmography Bede adds a shorter book — "De Temporibus" — on the Divisions of Time, beginning with day and night, week, month, year, &c., and passing by easy steps to a full explanation of the Paschal Cycle. His last six chapters arrange the heads of civil

history in six divisions, which were recognised as the Six Ages of the World. This book is the skeleton or elementary introduction to a more advanced treatise of considerable length—"De Temporum Ratione"—on the Theory of Astronomical Times and Seasons, which is a digest of the higher astronomical knowledge of the day, leading up to the best attainable understanding of the astronomical basis of the calendar, of the Paschal Cycle of nineteen years, and all that related to the Roman rule concerning Easter. This treatise also ends with a summary of the chief historical events in each of the six ages of the world; but the summary is enlarged into a digest of sacred history, and of profane history, so far as it was memorable for its connection with the rise and spread of Christianity. There is added to this historical sketch a chapter showing the three opinions of the faithful as to the time of the Lord's coming; it ends with the wise sentence that "he errs in none who affirms or denies none." This is followed by chapters upon the times of Antichrist, the Day of Judgment, and upon the Seventh and Eighth Ages to come—the Seventh being man's Sabbath age of rest in the grave; the Eighth that which shall begin on the day of resurrection.

Attrition of Rome-bred doctrine with the eastern usages, to which the British Church still clung, produced much thunder. There was thunder out of the south, and lightning from the east, with storm in plenty; and monastic zeal in the teaching of astronomy was quickened and warmed by the determination of the clergy of the Roman school to preach down and teach down the British heresy concerning times for celebrating Easter. What Bede taught in a short treatise dogmatically, and in a long treatise theoretically, he reduced also to a catechism—"De Ratione Computi"—for the use of pupils in the monastery school. He wrote also, as a separate treatise, a long letter on the celebration of Easter, and a narrative of the way in which

Pope Victor, having committed to Theophilus, Bishop of Cæsarea and Palestine, the charge of settling, by help of a synod, the one right way of keeping this great period of fast and festival (customs before then differing), the bishops opened the arguments by declaring that nothing could be settled unless they began at the beginning. Bede then shows by what questions and answers they proved out of Scripture that this world began at the vernal equinox, or on the 21st of March, the moon then being full—one of two "great lights." It was in spring, because it is said the earth brought forth grass; it was equinox, because light was said to have been divided equally from darkness. Also the first day of the world was a Sunday, and the day of our Lord's resurrection was a Sunday, because it is written of it, "this is the day that the Lord hath made;" and therefore Easter day can only be kept on Sunday. I need show no more of the nature of the arguments.

In addition to these educational works, there are ascribed to Bede, on authority of various degrees of weight, other books, on astronomical and Paschal computation; upon grammar, from Donatus; rhetoric; arithmetic; speech by the fingers; theoretical music; practical music; horology; phlebotomy; elements of philosophy; languages of nations; philosophical axioms, from Aristotle; the Seven Miracles of the world; proverbs and prognostics.

But this was incidental work. The utmost labour of Bede was spent in diligent collection and digestion of all that seemed to him to have been wisely said by the interpreters of Scripture. His "Four Books on the beginning of Genesis to the birth of Isaac and election of Ishmael" were begun, he says, at the request of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, for the purpose of bringing into a volume, of which the transcription would not be too costly for all but the rich, the information diffused through the nine books (including six of the Days of Creation, called a

"Hexameron") by Basil the Great, Latinised by Eustathius; the six books of the "Hexameron" of Ambrose of Milan; and the twelve books of St. Augustine of Hippo, besides the two that he wrote against the Manichæans. To such condensation of the knowledge scattered over many costly MSS. into compendious treatises, that might be copied and recopied at reasonable cost, and that would make the pith of sound doctrine easily attainable by many, Bede gave his utmost energy. He had a clear mind wherewith to apprehend, arrange, and sift the best truth he could find by unlocking the word-hoard of costly books that Abbot Benedict brought to the Wearmouth library. Of the Four Books upon Genesis, he says that he sought matter for them not only in the volumes especially pointed out to him, but in other writings of the same and other fathers; so that he gives the general mind of the fathers on that part of Scripture. "Now," he says, "in their own words; now for brevity's sake in mine;" his commission having been, "from the delightful plains of a wide flowering paradise to pluck what might seem sufficient for the needs of the infirm." Bede also completed a large body of Commentaries upon the Pentateuch, nearly half of them being devoted to Genesis. This was a work in three books, expounding facts, and figurative spiritual interpretation of the facts, related concerning "The Tabernacle and its vessels, and the garments of the priests." There is also a similar interpretation of the Temple of Solomon, in which the windows, for example, are the holy teachers through whom enters the light of Heaven, and in which the cedar is the incorruptible beauty of the virtues. Bede wrote also six books of a spiritual interpretation, chapter by chapter, or "Allegorical Exposition of the Book of the Prophet Samuel;" and a book answering thirty questions arising out of the Books of Kings, which had been submitted to Bede by Northelm, a brother priest. Still delighting to interpret facts of Scripture

history into spiritual allegory, and showing often in this labour of compilation and invention a more charming poetical sense than readers might expect to find in the exegetical works of an old Anglo Saxon priest, Bede wrote also, by way of allegorical exposition, three books on Esdras and Nehemiah, three on the Proverbs of Solomon, six upon Solomon's Song, one on the Song of Habakkuk. These are his undoubted works on the Old Testament. There are also ascribed to him a short collection of opinions of the fathers on the six days of creation; a book of instruction in Genesis by dialogue between master and pupil; shorter books of questions on the other volumes of the Pentateuch, on Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the Books of Kings, and a commentary on the Psalms, with lesser writings.

Of study of the New Testament we have as the undoubted work of Bede a full and devout critical and moral exposition of each of the four gospels; four books upon the Gospel of St. Matthew, four upon that of St. Mark, six upon that of St. Luke, and an almost equally long exposition, not technically divided into books, of the Gospel according to St. John. This work also was done at the request of, and dedicated to, Bishop Acca.

Acca was a follower of Wilfrid, whom he succeeded, in or about the year 709, as Bishop of Hexham. He was employing all the powers of his mind, and spending all his means, on the architectural adornment of his church of St. Andrew, and in supplying it with an ample library, besides relics, rich vases for incense, and twelve years' instruction in church music from Maban, an Italian vocalist; but Acca himself is said to have been "a heavenly singer."

Acca still urging Bede in frequent letters "not to permit the edge of his mind to become rusty or dull by inert ease, but to be vigilant and unwearied in daily study of the Scrip-

ture,"* encouraged him also to a written study of the Acts of the Apostles. A Preface to the Seven Canonical Epistles, and expositions of the Epistles of James, Peter, and John, with three books of an "Explanation of the Apocalypse," complete Bede's exegetical works. But we have forty-nine authentic sermons of his in two books, and a hundred and nine more that are ascribed to him; besides a metrical life of St. Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, in forty-seven chapters of hexameters; and in Latin hexameter also the Passion of Justin Martyr, a short poetical Martyrology, arranged by months, three hymns celebrating God in Nature, and one in the short lines which so readily fell into rhyme. In those short lines there are nine hymns, to be sung to the native measures on important saints' days; and although none are intentionally rhymed, they show how the uniform inflexional endings made the early suggestion of rhyme inevitable.† We have also from Bede's hand Latin metrical psalms, one of them in short lines with rhyme; and in prose, a few pure strains of prayer and praise. To all this evidence of his activity of mind there are still to be added his lives of the first five abbots of his own twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow —Benedict, Ceolfrid, Easterwin, Sigfrid, and Huætberct; a prose life of St. Cuthbert; a short life of St. Felix; a full prose Martyrology, and his "Ecclesiastical History."

Bede's "Ecclesiastical History of England" tells the Political History of the country when its soul lay in the

* "Accepi creberrimas beatitudinis tuæ litteras, quibus me commonere dignatus es ne mentis acumen inerti otio torpere et obdormire permittam."—*Ad Accam Bedæ Epist. in Expos. Act. Apost.*

† That on St. Agnes' day begins, for example:

"Illuxit alma sæculis
Dies beata virginis,
Quæ morte victa perpetis
Vitæ recepit gaudia.
Intravit Agnes auream
Poli triumphans regiam," &c.

diffusion of Christianity, and the relations of a missionary clergy to the chiefs of independent provinces. As seen from the religious side, which alone had strong interest for a body of scholars who were all vowed to the direct service of God, history, like science and arithmetic, would have been studied and taught in the monasteries as an ecclesiastical matter, if the fact that there was no literature—no working national mind—outside the Church, had not made it inevitable that an ecclesiastical history should at that time contain all the essentials of the story of the nation. What Bede wrote was the History of England as far as it was in his time known and understood by the best men in England.

Bede's "Ecclesiastical History": the first History of England.

The work is addressed to the Ceolwulf who was King of Northumberland when Bede completed it, and the date with which it ends is 731. It begins with a brief general account of Britain and British history before the arrival of Augustine. This is derived mainly from Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, Eutropius, and Gildas; there is a citation of St. Basil, and there are some additions and corrections derived from current tradition or information given to Bede by Abbot Albinus, a pupil at Canterbury of Theodore and Adrian; and by Northelm, a priest of London, afterwards, in 736, Archbishop of Canterbury. It was chiefly Albinus who encouraged Bede to undertake the work, and he was of all helpers the most indefatigable. When Northelm went on church affairs of his own to Rome he used that opportunity of making search in Bede's behalf among the archives of St. Peter's, bringing back for his friend copies of letters by Gregory the Great and other popes relating to the church history of Britain, and these letters are included in Bede's work. Such helpers, strong partisans of Rome, supplied not only the details concerning bishops and kings of the West Saxons, aided, as regarded the West Saxons, by Daniel, bishop of that province; but they also gave the

general Roman account of British ecclesiastical history, which, of course, ascribed the merit of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to the Roman Pope Gregory and the Roman Augustine, taking but slight notice of the previous energetic labours of the native British Church. Of the piety of Cedd and Chad, who were the most effective missionaries of the Mercians, and were inspired not from Rome, but from Iona, Bede nevertheless tells, from records and traditions known to the Abbot Esius, of Lindesey (now a part of Lincolnshire), or learnt from Bishop Cunebert of Sidnacester, now Lincoln, "or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit." But what was done in the Church throughout the province of the Northumbrians—that is to say, in his own district, he tells us, "from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not from any particular author, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same, besides what I had of my own knowledge." And he adds of Cuthbert, the credit of whose labours was certainly not due to the Pope of Rome, "that which I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my treatise on his life and actions, I partly took, and faithfully copied from what I found written of him by the brethren of the church of Lindisfarne, but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of such as knew him." To this satisfactory citation of the authorities on which, with pure regard for truth, and in sympathy with all good men, he rested the first great historical work in our literature, the faithful scholar adds his humble entreaty to the reader, "that if he shall in this that we have written find anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not impute the same to me, who, as the true rule of history requires, have laboured sincerely to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report

for the instruction of posterity." The best charm of the work is, in fact, its sincerity. Himself attached to the Roman see, and humbly admitting all its claims, Bede gives to Gregory and Augustine the place claimed for them by Rome, and too exclusively conceded to them by many later writers; but nobody has shown more clearly in honest detail how much of the noblest missionary work is to be traced to Iona and Lindisfarne. Even Cædmon at Whitby was in a monastery that owed nothing to Rome, and that was opposed to the determination of the Roman see to crush into conformity with its own discipline the wholesome native missionary church. Bede distinguished also in his history between the value of testimony; stating when his informant was an eye-witness, when, as in relating miracles which it was not then unreasonable to credit, he repeated the report of many tongues.*

* The best edition of Bede's History is that, founded on a careful collation of MSS., published in 1838 for the Historical Society, by Joseph Stevenson. A MS. of Bede's History, formerly belonging to More, Bishop of Ely, is in the public library at Cambridge (Kk. 5, 16). Other MSS. are in the Brit. Mus.: Cotton, Tib. C, ii.; Tib. A, xiv.; Harleian 4978.; King's MS. 13 c. v. The work was first translated into English by Thomas Stapleton, student in divinity (Antwerp, 1565), with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth. In this country the first edition of the text was the folio published at Cambridge in 1643-4, by Abraham Wheloc, who gave in an appendix the Anglo-Saxon translation by King Alfred the Great. Abraham Wheloc, Professor of Arabic, had then held for about three years, as first lecturer, the first Anglo-Saxon lectureship established in this country. It was founded at Cambridge, in 1640, by Sir Henry Spelman, then eighty years old, who appropriated part of his own annual income and the vicarage of Middleton, in the diocese of Norwich, augmented by himself, as a stipend either for the reading of Anglo-Saxon lectures or publication of curious Anglo-Saxon MSS. Wheloc preferred private study, and began with this issue of Bede. Sir Henry Spelman's son, Sir John, wrote a "Life of King Alfred." Sir John dying soon after his father, upon the death of Wheloc, who had been recommended to Sir Henry Spelman by Archbishop Ussher, Clement Spelman named

Bede survived only for about three years the completion of his History. It may have been as a consequence of close bookwork, insufficiently sustained by daily exercise, that Bede "suffered in his stomach, and drew his breath with pains and sighs."* Whatever his ailment was, he died of it on one spring day in the year 735; and of the manner of his death we have a touching and most characteristic account in a letter written while the grief of it was fresh, by one of his pupils to another.

"*Cuthbert's Letter on the Death of Venerable Bede.*

"To his fellow-reader Cuthwin, beloved in Christ, Cuthbert, his schoolfellow; health for ever in the Lord. I have received with much pleasure the small present which you sent me, and with much satisfaction read the letters of your devout erudition; wherein I found that masses and holy prayers are diligently celebrated by you for our father and master, Bede, whom God loved: this is what I principally de-

the Rev. Samuel Foster as successor. But Archbishop Ussher so strongly urged the claims of William Somner, then engaged upon his Saxon Dictionary, that Mr. Foster had the living, Mr. Somner the lecturer's stipend; and the pay of the lectureship was probably so much reduced by the partition that it was not offered to another. In 1659, one year before the Restoration, Somner published his Saxon Dictionary, and in the dedication to Roger Spelman, Esq., grandson of Sir Henry, expressly mentions his having succeeded to the annual stipend which Professor Wheloc enjoyed till his death.

This Cambridge lectureship having fallen into abeyance, the Anglo-Saxon professorship at Oxford was founded, in 1752, by the will of Dr. Richard Rawlinson, F.R.S., F.S.A., who gave rents in Lancashire for its endowment, but hampered his gifts with various petty restrictions on its usefulness. He left estates to the Society of Antiquaries on conditions which they rejected. Dr. Bosworth, who held the Oxford professorship, bequeathed funds for the revival of a professorship of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge, and after Dr. Bosworth's death in May, 1876, that professorship was constituted, and the Rev. Walter W. Skeat was appointed to the chair in May, 1878; Dr. Bosworth was succeeded at Oxford by the Rev. John Earle.

* Will. of Malmesbury, lib. i. c. 2.

sired, and therefore it is more pleasing, for the love of him (according to my capacity), in a few words to relate in what manner he departed this world, understanding that you also desire and ask the same. He was much troubled with shortness of breath, yet without pain, before the day of our Lord's resurrection, that is, about a fortnight; and thus he afterwards passed his life, cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God every day and night, nay, every hour, till the day of our Lord's ascension, that is, the seventh before the kalends of June [twenty-sixth of May], and daily read lessons to us his disciples, and whatever remained of the day he spent in singing psalms; he also passed all the night awake, in joy and thanksgiving, unless a short sleep prevented it; in which case he no sooner awoke than he presently repeated his wonted exercises, and ceased not to give thanks to God with uplifted hands. I declare with truth, that I have never seen with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any man so earnest in giving thanks to the living God.

"O truly happy man! He chanted the sentence of St. Paul the Apostle, 'It is dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God,' and much more out of Holy Writ; wherein also he admonished us to think of our last hour, and to shake off the sleep of the soul; and being learned in our poetry, he said some things also in our tongue, for he said, putting the same into English,

"For þam neod-fere	Ær his heonen-gange
Nenig wyrðeð	Hwet his gaste
þances snottra	Godes oððe yveles
þonne him þearf sy	Efter deaðe heonen
To gehiggene	Demed wurðe."

which means this:—

"'No man is wiser than is requisite, before the necessary departure; that is, to consider, before the soul departs hence, what good or evil it hath done, and how it is to be judged after its departure.'

"He also sang antiphons according to our custom and his own, one of which is, 'O glorious King, Lord of all power, who, triumphing this day, didst ascend above all the heavens; do not forsake us orphans; but send down upon us the Spirit of truth which was promised to us by the Father. Hallelujah!' And when he came to that word, 'do not forsake us,' he burst into tears, and wept much, and an hour after he began to repeat what he had commenced, and we, hearing it, mourned with him. By turns we read, and by turns we wept, nay, we wept always whilst we read. In such joy we passed the days of Lent, till the aforesaid day; and he rejoiced much, and

gave God thanks, because he had been thought worthy to be so weakened. He often repeated that 'God scourgeth every son whom Hé receiveth;' and much more out of Holy Scripture; as also this sentence from St. Ambrose, 'I have not lived so as to be ashamed to live among you; nor do I fear to die, because we have a gracious God.' During these days he laboured to compose two works well worthy to be remembered, besides the lessons we had from him, and singing of Psalms: viz., he translated the Gospel of St. John as far as the words, 'But what are these among so many,' &c. [St. John vi. 9], into our own tongue, for the benefit of the Church; and some collections out of the 'Book of Notes' of Bishop Isidorus, saying, 'I will not have my pupils read a falsehood, nor labour therein without profit after my death.' When the Tuesday before the ascension of our Lord came, he began to suffer still more in his breath, and a small swelling appeared in his feet; but he passed all that day and dictated cheerfully, and now and then among other things said, 'Go on quickly, I know not how long I shall hold out, and whether my Maker will not soon take me away.' But to us he seemed very well to know the time of his departure; and so he spent the night, awake, in thanksgiving; and when the morning appeared, that is, Wednesday, he ordered us to write with all speed what he had begun; and this done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of saints, according to the custom of that day. There was one of us with him, who said to him, 'Most dear master, there is still one chapter wanting: do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?' He answered, 'It is no trouble. Take your pen, and make ready, and write fast.' Which he did; but at the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have some little articles of value in my chest, such as pepper, napkins, and incense; run quickly, and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute among them the gifts which God has bestowed on me. The rich in this world are bent on giving gold and silver and other precious things; but I, in love, will joyfully give my brothers what God has given unto me.' He spoke to every one of them, admonishing and entreating them that they would carefully say masses and prayers for him, which they readily promised; but they all mourned and wept, especially because he said, 'They should no more see his face in this world.' They rejoiced for that he said, 'It is time that I returned to Him who formed me out of nothing: I have lived long: my merciful Judge well foresaw my life for me; the time of my dissolution draws nigh; for I desire to die and to be with Christ.' Having said much more, he passed the day joyfully till the evening; and the boy, above mentioned, said, 'Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written.' He

answered, 'Write quickly.' Soon after, the boy said, 'The sentence is now written.' He replied, 'It is well; you have said the truth. It is ended. Receive my head into your hands, for it is a great satisfaction to me to sit facing my holy place, where I was wont to pray, that I may also sitting call upon my Father.' And thus on the pavement of his little cell, singing, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' when he had named the Holy Ghost, he breathed his last, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom. All who were present at the death of the blessed father said they had never seen any other person expire with so much devotion, and in so tranquil a frame of mind. For as you have heard, so long as the soul animated his body he never ceased to give thanks to the true and living God, with expanded hands exclaiming, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!' with other spiritual ejaculations. But know this, dearest brother, that I could say much concerning him, if my want of learning did not cut short my discourse. Nevertheless, by the grace of God, I purpose shortly to write more concerning him, particularly of those things which I saw with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears."*

Bede was buried first under the church porch, and afterwards within the church at Jarrow. There Elfred, a priest of Durham, prayed at his tomb on every anniversary of his death. But on one of these occasions † Elfred went to Jarrow as usual, and, having spent some days alone in the

* The letter is in Asser's "Annals," Simeon of Durham, and elsewhere. I quote from the volume in Bohn's Antiquarian Library, which contains translations both of Bede's "Ecclesiastical History" and of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with an Introduction, edited by Dr. Giles. By this volume Bede's History is made easily accessible to every English reader. The lines of Bede's death-song, in the old Northumbrian of the St. Gall MS. 254, run thus, as given in Henry Sweet's "Oldest English Texts":—

> Fore there neidfaerae nænig uuiurthit
> thoncsnotturra than him thar[f] sie,
> to ymbhycggannae, aer his hiniong[a]e,
> huaet his gastae godaes aeththa yflaes,
> aefter ðeothðaege doemid uucorth[a]e.

† The story is told by Simeon of Durham.

church praying and watching, he returned alone to Durham in the early morning, and he never again visited Jarrow. A few silent monks in Durham learnt from him that he had stolen the bones of the Venerable Bede, and laid them in their own church side by side with those of the holy Cuthbert. When it was no longer possible that they should be reclaimed by Jarrow these relics were employed as a source of income, and in the middle of the twelfth century Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, built over them a beautiful shrine of gold, silver, and jewels.

Of the well-known line inscribed to Bede's memory in Durham Cathedral, where his bones lay till, in the days of Henry VIII., their rich shrine was broken, and the bones themselves were scattered by the mob, there is a legend that might well be true if angels took part in the affairs of men. A pupil who had been chosen to write his master's epitaph laboured in vain to complete the hexameter line in which he was to record that "In this grave are the bones of Bede." He fell asleep over his toil at the unfinished line—

"Hac sunt in fossa, Bedæ ossa."

But an angel bent over the sleeping youth, and with a pencil of light supplied the missing word. The student awoke and read, "Hac sunt in fossa, Bedæ Venerabilis ossa." England has ratified the title, and to the end of time his countrymen will look back with affectionate honour to the sinless student-life of Venerable Bede.

CHAPTER VI.

ALCUIN.

EGBERT, Archbishop of York, was placed as a child in the monastery of Hexham, under Bishop Eata, who died A.D. 685. He received deacon's orders at Rome, and became Archbishop of York in the year 732. Two years afterwards Bede addressed to him an interesting letter on the duties of his office. He should avoid festivity and avarice, endeavouring to check the increasing negligence of the Northumbrian clergy, and the corruption of morals in the monasteries, with special discouragement of the "wicked custom"—become general in Northumbria during the previous thirty years—of the foundation and endowment of monasteries by earls as places of retirement for themselves and their wives, so that they were at once abbots and earls or attendants on the king. Supported by the evidence of Bede's letter, Egbert worked in the way indicated, and he founded a good school at York, wherein he had Alcuin for a pupil. Egbert wrote a dialogue on the "Ecclesiastical Institution," published excerpts from the older canons of the Church, and composed the "Confessionale" and "Pœnitentiale," showing grounds of advice in confession, and the penances to be imposed—as that if a monk were sick through drunkenness, he should fast thirty days. These were written both in Anglo-Saxon and in Latin, and were afterwards standard authorities in the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Egbert.

Alcuin, to whom Charlemagne looked for instruction, often used a Latinised form of his name, as Albinus, and signed himself also Flaccus, in letters to his friends—sometimes as Flaccus Albinus, sometimes as Albinus Flaccus. "Often," he says, in a letter to the nun Gundrad, whom he is calling Eulalia, "familiarity is apt to cause a change of name; as our Lord himself changed Simon into Peter, and called the sons of Zebedee the Sons of Thunder, as you may see in ancient and in these our latest days."* Nothing is known with certainty of Alcuin's parentage. George Buchanan † judged, by his possible assumption of the name Albinus from a home in Alban, that he was a Scotchman. But Alcuin himself writes to the monks of York: ‡ "You cherished, as with maternal affection, the frail years of my infancy, and sustained with pious patience the time of the lusts of youth, and by the discipline of fatherly castigation brought me up to the perfect age of manhood." Scripture was then misread into an ordinance of severity in education; and Aldhelm, according to the spirit of his time, which remained unaltered for centuries, had transposed in one of his proverbs the text, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," into "If a father loves his child he thrashes him." Alcuin.

In the religious community at York, Alcuin, either as orphan or dedicated infant, found from his infancy father and mother. He was child of the monastery, trained in it when Egbert and Albert ruled. Egbert became archbishop three years before the death of Bede, and, as he ruled thirty-four years before Albert succeeded him, the date of the death of Bede—735—is sometimes given as a probable

* Alcuin, ep. 125 (anno 800). Alcuin's works are contained in two volumes of Migne's "Patrologia," and references here given are to this edition.

† Hist. lib. v.

‡ Ep. 6, ad Fratres Eboracensis Ecclesiæ.

date of the birth of Alcuin. Alcuin was carefully trained for the church in the monastery school, where Archbishop Egbert himself expounded the New Testament, while his relation Albert explained the Old Testament, and taught also Latin and science. Of Albert, Alcuin records that he sought to attach to himself and to the monastery whatever youths he saw to possess good natural ability.*

When Albert went the way of all Church scholars, to Rome, in search of literature and other means of strength to the Church, Alcuin, as a young monk of high promise, was his companion. "When as a youth," he says in a letter to Charlemagne, "I went to Rome, I spent some days in Pavia, a royal city, where a certain Jew named Julius held disputation with that Master Peter who shone at your court as a teacher of grammar."†

After that first visit to Rome Alcuin remained with the community at York, learning and teaching, till the death of Egbert, in 766. Albert, then raised to the archbishopric, consecrated Alcuin deacon, and transferred to him the care over the school and library. On the library committed to his charge he wrote in Latin verse:—

> "Small is the space which contains the gifts of heavenly Wisdom,
> Which you, reader, rejoice piously here to receive;
> Better than richest gifts of the Kings, this treasure of Wisdom,
> Light, for the seeker of this, shines on the road to the Day."

In one of his larger poems Alcuin celebrates the contents of the library so carefully collected. It contained MSS. of the Latin and Greek Fathers, as well as some Hebrew. There were, he says, the works of Jerome, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, Athanasius, Orosius, Gregory the Great, Pope

* "Indolis egregiæ juvenes quoscunque videbat,
Hos sibi conjunxit, docuit, nutrivit, amavit."
Alcuin *de Pontificibus et Sanctis Eccl. Ebor.*

† Ep. 101.

Leo, Basil, Fulgentius, Cassiodorus, Chrysostom, John, Lactantius, Aldhelm, Bede, Victorinus, Boethius, Sedulius, Juvencus, Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator; of the old classical writers, Pompeius, Pliny, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Statius, Lucan, and Auctor; of grammarians and teachers, Probus and Focas, Donatus, Priscian, Servitus, Euticius, Pompeius, Comminianus. Having celebrated these, he adds that there were very many more of whose names the recital would be too long for his verse. Alcuin, as the librarian and teacher in the school, drew knowledge from the books, and poured it orally among the pupils. With some of his old pupils at York Alcuin, in his later days of high prosperity, maintained a correspondence.

But after the death of Albert, in 780, Alcuin's friend and pupil Eanbald was raised to the see, and he gratified Alcuin by sending him to Rome for the Archbishop's pall, and for what addition to his library he could take that opportunity of finding.

Now Charlemagne, who had been busy at Rome—having his youngest son, Louis le Debonnaire, crowned King of Aquitaine, and his second son, Pepin, crowned King of Lombardy—came on his return through Parma, while Alcuin was staying in that city. It was two years after Charlemagne, victorious against the Saracens in Spain, had suffered, on his return across the Pyrenees, defeat of his rear guard by the Basques, at the Pass of Roncesvalles, where fell Count Roland of Brittany, hero of many legends. The unknown author of a life of Alcuin, written, not long after his death, from information given by his friend and pupil Sigulf, says that "Charlemagne knew Alcuin, who had formerly been sent to him by his master on some mission."* Charlemagne, finding Alcuin at Parma,

* This life, in fifteen short chapters, was first edited by Andreas Quercetan (André du Chesne of Tours), in 1617, from the old MS. at Rheims. It professes to have been written when Aldric was abbot of

desired to engage him as a teacher of his children, and what we might call Minister of Public Education in his empire. Alcuin accepted the offer, and, having returned to York for the permission of his superior, he went in the year 782 to Charlemagne's court, taking some of his pupils with him, among whom were Wizo, named Candidus; Fredegisus, named Nathaniel; and Sigulf, as assistants.

Anglo-Saxon Scholarship.

At the death of Bede the Anglo-Saxon Church yielded the best practical scholarship in Christendom. The instrument was valued only for its use, and the Latin style of English scholars, which was as good as that of their neighbours in the days of Bede and Alcuin, afterwards greatly degenerated; for wild Danes overran the land, and after that, among earnest men, the habit grew of speaking to the people in their own tongue. By the monasteries, too, relaxed in discipline or reformed with cramping strictness, the best part of their use was after Alcuin's time already fulfilled, and the time was advancing rapidly when they could no longer represent the best intellect of England. In the days of Bede, though learned men might travel from England to Rome in search of lore, that quiet, humble, busy monk in the small book-room at Jarrow was spoken of throughout Western Christendom, and was the most famous man in the Church. Elsewhere there were Chrodoberts and Jonases, and the Popes themselves were yielding a Donus and an Agatho, a Leo II. and an Adrian I. Deacon Paul Wilfrid was a credit to the Lombards. Toledo had its Hildefonsus upholding the perpetual virginity of St. Mary, had also its Julian, Idalius, Felix, and Elipandus, causer of much strife, but English

Ferrara, *i. e.*, before the year 829. The writer says that he had his information from his teacher Sigulf, who was Alcuin's pupil; and Sigulf was the abbot who preceded Aldric in the monastery at Ferrara. The memoir forms part of the prefatory matter in Migne's edit on of Alcuin.

Bede had not his equal. Then while the fame of Bede was fresh, the fame of Alcuin rose; and in him there was one more representative of the soundest, the most practical, expression of the spirit of the Latin Church. Charlemagne also was strong in his own form of practical Latinity. A soldier and statesman, with a very keen sense of the real, and a desire to turn learning and all other good things to substantial account, he appropriated to himself in his own way the genius of the Roman laws and customs, and wrote in his own Roman text those diplomatic works upon the lands of Europe which we find also as they were written in ink for him by his secretaries. He seized in his own rugged way of military statesmanship on Latin Christianity, and was resolved to cut and carve the Pagan Saxons into images of Christians. With a working mind of restless energy he lost no time, but spent his summers in war, and his winters at home, inquiring, planning, learning all that it seemed useful to know, drilling also his family, marrying a new wife when the old was sentenced to divorce—he had nine wives, of whom three died in his lifetime—and forbidding marriage to his daughters. He was ready to conquer and transplant either men or pot-herbs. Many a hill-side and country garden smiles yet with the vines and mulberries he planted; and valuing also the tree of study only for its fruits, practical Charlemagne offered to the softer grasp of the studious scholar of York his hand horny with the rub of a sword hilt, and, untrained as he himself was to the pen, claimed Alcuin as an ally. He had, eight years before, fetched from beyond the Alps the Lombard Deacon Paul, and also that Master Peter whom he had made court schoolmaster, and of whom he had himself taken some lessons in grammar. Now he obtained the help of Alcuin, who, besides all that we may infer from his extant letters to Charlemagne, and incidental illustrations of life at the Frankish court, has left

Alcuin and Charlemagne.

a special note of his regard for the nobility of the king's mind, "when among so many cares of the palace and occupations of government he has been anxious thoroughly to know those mysteries of the philosophers with which another in the sluggishness of ease will hardly try to be acquainted."*

But Alcuin strongly protested against his Majesty's wild method of converting the Saxons. Alcuin joined his court in the year when Charlemagne, a religious tiger with a taste for brains, caused 4,500 Saxons to be led to the bank of a small stream flowing into the Weser and there beheaded, crimsoning all the water with their blood. But he gave his confidence to Alcuin as a true man in the world of scholarship as well as a sound practical Christian, and he could bear to be told by him that this was not practical Christianity.

The fearless heathen Saxons of the continent, against whom the enmity of Charlemagne was so inveterate, were related closely to the Anglo-Saxons, who had made in Britain the best Christians in Europe. They of the continent, yet unconverted, were true to the death to the religion they then held and to the liberty they cherished, bound not even to each other as Transalbingians, Angrarians, Westfalai, west of the Weser, or Ost-falai, east of the Weser, by any recognition of a common suzerain. And when, after a struggle of many years, they submitted to the Frankish sovereignty, they retained their own "Laws of the Saxons and of the Frisians," and made good their right to stand as equals to the Franks, paying no tribute, but only, like the Franks, tithes to the clergy.

Charlemagne had at his court a sort of learned academy, in which the members took to themselves, or received, celebrated ancient names. It was from this sport probably that

* "De Ratione Animæ."

Alcuin took the name of Flaccus. As for Charlemagne, Alcuin addresses him usually as King David, as "sweetest David," or as "most beloved David;" but he sees in him a David capable of great wrong, who has need sometimes of a prophetic warning. Always in the manner of a friend, not of a servant, he meets, therefore, the power of his rugged patron with the wholesomest plain speaking. When Charlemagne, everywhere conqueror, is within a few months of being crowned Emperor of the West, Alcuin is telling him, in 799, that the first man in the world is the Pope; that the second man is the Emperor of the Second Rome in the East; and that the third man is his sweetest David, with a power and a wisdom that gave him an influence on which the whole well-being of the Church of Christ depends. In Rome, where piety once abounded, was neither fear of God, wisdom, nor love.

"*Alcuin to Charlemagne.*

"These," he said to the king, "are the dangerous times once foretold by Truth itself, 'because the love of many shall wax cold.' Never neglect care of the head. Let the feet be a grievance rather than the head. Make peace with a misdoing people [the Saxons] if it can be done. Abate a little of your threatening, lest they fly obdurate from before you; but let them be kept in hope until by wholesome counsel they shall be recalled to peace. Hold what you have, lest seeking to add the less, you lose the greater. Preserve your own sheep-fold, lest the wolf should lay it waste. We should so labour in affairs of others as not to bring hurt to our own. I spoke formerly to you, most sacred Piety, about the exaction of tithes; because it is so much better either that the public compulsion should be remitted for a while, till faith has thoroughly grown in their hearts, if that country be indeed worthy the election of God. They who went into exile were good Christians, as is known in many cases. For Babylon, because of the sins of the people, is declared a habitation of devils, as is read in the Prophets."

So, with a little humouring of his fiercely energetic David, Alcuin ends, and adds for Charlemagne, in hexameters and pentameters, a prayer that the merciful Christ

will rule, exalt, protect, adorn, and love him; "and that he will read in the light of clemency that letter which the love of duty wrote."

Meanwhile Alcuin was teaching in the usual manner by making all knowledge subservient to the one great end of the priest's labours. He classed doctrine, according to the manner of the time, into seven degrees or steps. The first three—Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic (Logic)—formed the Trivium of Ethics; the next four—Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy—formed the Quadrivium of Physics, and they all led up, step by step, to Theology.* The taste of Charlemagne himself was for astronomy, and a considerable part of Alcuin's extant letters to him consists of replies to questions and desired explanations of the Emperor's own observations in this science. Charlemagne, for example, was once puzzled by the unusually long absence from the sky of Mars, the fiery planet of the conqueror, and Alcuin must account for this. Astronomy, in the eyes of Alcuin, had two uses: one to display the power of God, and one to fix the Church calendar; the second of these being the use most dwelt upon. Mere figures could be so taught as to take a spiritual sense. Thus Alcuin, in a letter to a pupil who asks for an explanation of the passage in the Song of Solomon, "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number," expounds from Scripture the perfection of six and the imperfection of eight; wherefore the world was created in six days, but the human race after the flood originated in the number eight; but our Lord was born in the sixth age of the world; proceeding to comment on the progression of numbers and the spirituality of aliquot parts.

* The trivium and quadrivium were thus defined, each in its own familiar hexameter :—

"*Gram.* loquitur; *Dia.* vera docet; *Rhet.* verba colorat.
Mus. canit; *Ar.* numerat; *Geo.* ponderat; *As.* colit astra."

Alcuin received grants, established monasteries and schools, was made rich and powerful; but he held simply to his work, teaching Charlemagne's sons, Charles, Pepin, and Louis, in the winter months, when they were not with their father hunting men and beasts; bidding also the King's sister Gisla—whom he called in their academic circle Lucia—and the King's daughters to their sacred study from the loom and spindle. Among Alcuin's extant educational works is one in the form of a dialogue between himself and Charlemagne's son Pepin, in the course of which Pepin asking "What is the liberty of Man?" Alcuin replies "Innocence." We see the trusted teacher also procuring ransom of prisoners taken by Louis, and joining the expression of his gratitude with admonition to him to be liberal and kind, pure in his home, just in his kingdom, to have truth on his lips and pious humility within his heart. Of Charles—Charlemagne's eldest son—he in one letter asks leave faithfully to lay before him some remarks on those parts of his conduct which he considers censurable. For the Emperor's sister Gisla Alcuin especially wrote a commentary on St. John's Gospel. Charlemagne required that there should be a school attached to every monastery. Many bishoprics and abbacies were in the gift of his imperial hand, and he was liberal in securing from his subjects their full contribution to the power of the Church. Valuable preferment was the reward of merit among Alcuin's pupils and friends; but, although strong in influence at the Frankish court, Alcuin himself was still only a deacon of York, and to York he returned for a time, after having spent eight years in the society of Charlemagne. But David would not part with his Flaccus, and, to hold Alcuin to the promise that he would return from England, sent him in the official character of Charlemagne's ambassador of peace and friendship to the chief of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Offa of Mercia—a monarch jealous of the shelter

Charlemagne had given to that Egbert, afterwards King of England, whom Offa had deposed. After an absence of less than two years Alcuin returned to the court of the Frank emperor in the year 792, and then finally accepted France as his home, receiving from Charlemagne the abbeys of Ferrières and St. Lupus of Troyes, and afterwards that of St. Martin of Tours.

When Alcuin returned, the Byzantine court had lately sent to Charlemagne the decrees of a second Synod of Nice, ordaining image worship. Alcuin brought word to France that the decrees of this synod were in England denounced as execrable, and produced a book, written by himself at York, against its Eastern heresy. It is a book that has not been preserved under his name; but Dr. Lorentz, in his "Life of Alcuin," expressed belief that we have it preserved to us in the vehement work known as the Carolinian Books, first printed in France in 1549, without the name of editor or printer, reprinted at once in Germany, and eagerly destroyed by the Catholics.*

Another doctrine against which Alcuin battled was that of Felix, Bishop of Urgel in Catalonia, and the aged Elipandus, Archbishop of Toledo, respecting the Adoption of the Messiah. On this subject Alcuin wrote seven books in reply to Felix, and a short letter to Elipandus, who replied with anger, and was answered mildly in another treatise of four books.

With advancing age came, however, the desire in Alcuin to quit the court and devote the rest of his life to monastic duties. He wished to retire to the monastery of St. Boniface at Fulda, distributing its revenues,

* "Alcuins Leben. Ein Beitrag zur Staats-Kirchen und Cultur-Geschichte der Karolingischen Zeit, von Dr. Friedrich Lorentz, Privatdocenten der Geschichte an der Universität zu Halle" (Halle, 1829). Of this book frequent use is made in the text. There is a translation of it by Jane Mary Slee (London, 1837).

which had been assigned to him, among his pupils. This Charlemagne would not suffer him to do, but gave him, in the year 796, the then vacant abbacy of St. Martin of Tours, partly because the monks of Tours needed the governing hand of a reformer. With the whole Church, indeed, as he found it upon his accession, Charlemagne had been dissatisfied. He found in the churches and monasteries hunting, fighting, drinking priests; and he forbade all but a few to bear weapons or appear in battle even against the heathen. He forbade, again and again, hunting and hawking by the clergy, or would allow certain monasteries to hunt on condition that they killed no more stags than would yield skin enough for covering their books; so that the more books the more sport. Alcuin also objected strongly to a delight that he found among the Frankish clergy in dramatic representations and antics of the jester. His own friend and pupil Angilbert, called in scholastic intercourse of the court Homerus—whom Charlemagne trusted in state affairs, and whom Charlemagne's second daughter Bertha trusted well enough to give him two illegitimate sons—brought some rebuke on himself by his relish of these entertainments. "The one thing," says Alcuin, in a letter to the fellow pupil who was Alcuin's home companion, "The one thing I disliked in Homerus was his pleasure in the actors whose empty plays exposed his soul to no little danger. I have therefore written to him about it, to show him the honest solicitude of my love; and it seemed to me, in fact, inexplicable that a man usually so wise should not perceive that he did what ill assorted with his worth and was in no way laudable.* In 789 Charlemagne, doubtless on Alcuin's prompting, ordered that priests who indulged themselves in theatrical amusements should be deprived of their office.

Charlemagne also would give out themes on which all

* Ep. 144.

the clergy were to preach, while his *missi regis*, the layman and priest who were the sovereign's eyes in each county, should report to him upon their sermons; and because, said Alcuin, "to question wisely is to teach," Charlemagne also gave out questions to which they must send in written replies. "We wish you," said one question, "to tell us truly what you mean when you say that you have renounced the world, and how one is to tell those who have renounced the world from those who are still in it? Is it only by their being unarmed and unmarried?" Thus, with a fresh and rude simplicity of energy, Charlemagne had followed his own way with Alcuin's counsel.

As Alcuin advanced in years he advanced also in austerity. The strictness that made him intolerant of the levity of monkish plays caused him even to forbid the pupils in his school at Tours to read the philosophy and poetry of ancient Greece or Rome. In the "Æneid" he saw only the heathen liar Virgil; "the good monk," he said, "should find enough to content him in the Christian poets." The spade and hoe were also taken at Tours from the hands of the monks; and they all had pens placed between their fingers, for they were told that the copying of books was better than the cultivation of the vine, by as much as reading lifted the soul higher than wine. The fame of the school spread, and it was much frequented. A commission of copyists was sent under Wizo to the library at York, and the utmost care in copying was enforced upon all. Roman letters took the place of the pointed Merovingian characters, and there was produced a body of manuscript remarkable at this day for its neatness and elegance. Alcuin multiplied greatly in France clear trustworthy copies of religious books; and multiplied greatly also the number of men able to read them, and to turn them to a right account.

Alcuin died on the 19th May in the year 804. He died troubled by the complaint of Charlemagne that the

monks of Tours had not done credit to his training, and himself under mild rebuke for having justified them, after the fact, in forcibly withholding from the jurisdiction of Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans, a condemned ecclesiastic of Theodulph's who had escaped from prison and sought sanctuary at the altar of St. Martin's.

It was a favourite phrase of Alcuin's to speak of himself as "the humble Levite," and none ever doubted that where there was great temptation to self-seeking and self-praise, his whole life was given, with Christian humility, to earnest and effective labour as a servant in the temple of God.

Alcuin's extant writings are 232 letters, with four fragments;* Questions and Answers upon Genesis; Exposition of the Penitential and other Psalms; Commentaries on Canticles and Ecclesiastes; seven books of Commentary on the Gospel of St. John; Expositions of Paul's Epistles to Philemon and the Hebrews; five books of Commentary on the Apocalypse; three books and some questions on Faith in the Trinity; a book on the Holy Spirit; the books against Felix and Elipandus; a long treatise on the Sacraments of the Church and Offices of the Liturgy; shorter books on Virtues and Vices, Free-will and the Confession of Sins; the Lives of Willibrord, Vedastus, and Richarius; inscriptions, epigrams, and poems. His educational works are—one on Grammar, in dialogue, between the Teacher, a Saxon, and a Frank; one on Orthography, in the usual form of alphabetical notes of mistakes to be avoided; two others are on Rhetoric and the Virtues, and on Dialectics—both these books being in a Dialogue with Charlemagne himself. There is also the Dialogue of Disputation between Alcuin and Pepin, and a little book about the calculations of the moon with a view to Easter.

Alcuin's Writings.

* In Ussher and William of Malmesbury.

Other works are, on doubtful authority, ascribed to him. Austerely practical, Alcuin achieved much for the education of the Franks, and for the bettering of discipline among their clergy, bringing for aid to his purpose Charlemagne's powers of compulsion into active exercise. His Latin verse does not display him as a poet. He writes with the vigour of a strong and honest mind, but no warmth of imagination animates his zeal to make all things subservient to the highest end. While he cast from him the Virgil that, as a lad at York, we are told, he hid under his bedclothes from the eyes of the brother who came with a cane to rouse the sleepers to nocturns, Alcuin fastened upon the Christian poets, and on Scripture itself, with a hard literalness that was in him always respectable. But it was expressed as well as unwittingly caricatured by Frediges, his pupil and appointed successor at Tours, when, in his treatise on "Nothing and Darkness," he affirmed that Nothing was Something, because God made everything out of it; and that Darkness was a substance, because Scripture had said of it that it was thick and might be felt.

Besides those who have been already mentioned, there were other writers who expressed the English mind in Latin verse during the eighth century and the earlier part of the ninth. One was the Worcestershire monk Tatwine, made Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 731, and during whose primacy the question of the relative dignity of the sees of York and Canterbury was decided in favour of Canterbury by Pope Gregory III. Tatwine, like Aldhelm, wrote Latin enigmas which are still extant in MS.*

Tatwine.

Of Ethelwolf, who wrote a Latin poem on the abbots and pious men of the monastery of St. Peter's in Lindis-

* In one known copy only, together with enigmas of Aldhelm, Symposius, &c. (MS. Reg. 12, c. xxiii).

farne, * it is known only that he was placed in that monastery when Sigfrid was abbot; therefore, towards the year 780. One of his teachers was named Iglac and of him there was, in a lost poem, a longer account. Ethelwolf of Lindisfarne.

* There is a MS. of it at Cambridge, and one also in the Bodleian. It was first printed by Mabillon in the "Actꝭ of the Benedictine Saints."

CHAPTER VII.

THE MOTHER TONGUE—*JUDITH.*

THE lines of Anglo-Saxon verse quoted in the letter of Bede's pupil Cuthbert,* as from the lips of his dying master, are in Anglo-Saxon of a form differing from that of the extant MSS. of the chief remains of First-English literature. But that provincial form, employed at Jarrow, could scarcely have been other than the Northumbrian, although it is not the dialect in which the verse ascribed to the Northumbrian Cædmon has come down to us.

Anglo-Saxon of Northumbria.

Among the remains of the Northumbrian Saxon is the runic writing combined with sculpture from sacred subjects and Latin inscriptions upon the stone obelisks at Ruthwell, on the Scottish border—an obelisk or cross that was flung down by the Presbyterians in 1642, and had part of its writing then effaced. The Ruthwell runes had been misread by Repp and Professor Finn Magnusen as half Danish or as some perfectly new language, and they were first rightly interpreted by John Mitchell Kemble in a paper on Anglo-Saxon Runes† read to the London Society of Antiquaries, as an inscription in what was the English of Northumbria during the seventh, eighth, and

The Ruthwell Cross.

* The MS. at St. Gall, containing Cuthbert's letter and these lines, is itself considered by Mr. Kemble to be as old as the first half of the 8th century.

† "Archæologia," vol. xxviii. (1840), pp. 349-359.

ninth centuries. Mr. Kemble then pointed out that they set forth a few couplets of a religious poem on the events sculptured in the two principal compartments of the stone, namely, the washing of our Saviour's feet by Mary Magdalene and the glorification of Christ through His Passion. The correctness of his interpretation was afterwards proved by the discovery of lines similar to those read by him in one of the poems of the Vercelli Book.* The lines upon the Ruthwell Cross have been attributed to Cædmon, but we may defer discussion of them till we have to speak of the Vercelli Book and its contents.

There is also a Northumbrian fragment of Cædmon from one of the most ancient copies of Alfred's "Bede," printed in Wanley's Catalogue. The Anglo-Saxon Ritual belonging to the Cathedral Church at Durham, called by tradition the Ritual of King Aldfrid, edited for the Surtees Society by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson in 1840,† supplies a fuller illustration of the early language of Northumbria, in an interlinear version, made about the year 970, of the greater part of its Latin text into the common speech of the district. The Durham Gospels, too, known as St. Cuthbert's or the Durham Book,‡ belonging to the close of the seventh century, have Northumbrian Saxon glosses of the age of those of the Ritual upon their Latin text. The

Fragment of Cædmon. Durham Ritual.

The Durham Gospels.

* "The Vision of the Holy Rood." See "Archæologia," vol. xxx. (1844), pp. 31-39.

This MS. is a small folio, 6½ inches high by 4¼ broad, written on 88 leaves of thick parchment, 23 lines to a page. It wants the first leaves containing the services from the Nativity to the Epiphany, has other leaves missing, and what were the blank leaves at its end—partly made blank by erasure—have been filled with miscellaneous entries of hymns, exorcism, tables of contraction used in civil law, &c. Some parts of the MS. are also defaced by use, time, and damp, and some of its Latin is so incorrectly written as to be unintelligible.

‡ Brit. Mus. Cott. Nero, D, 4.

Northumbrian of the Ritual and the Durham Book belong to a period of more than a century and a half later than the irruption of the Danes—an event by which language was perceptibly affected.

After the Danes had desolated monasteries, and checked for a time the advance of mind in the North of England, it was among the West Saxons that King Alfred re-established a regard for letters. The monuments of Anglo-Saxon literature thus transferred from the North to the South were then and afterwards recopied into the dialect of the South for Southern reading.

Northumbrian poetry transcribed in Wessex.

The student of language is much aided by the early glosses, which interpreted words in their Latin texts to readers and learners in the monasteries. From the glosses in these Latin texts Mr. Henry Sweet has shown * that the earliest glossaries were made. The maker of a glossary sat in the library of his religious house, having about him manuscripts of Latin texts on which there were marginal or interlinear translations of words into English. Then he transcribed the words interpreted, and added the interpretations, without caring at first to put his transcripts into alphabetical order. Of this form is the glossary at Leyden, copied in the ninth century by a High German scribe who was ignorant of English, and mixed a little old High German with the copying of words he saw. The same is noted of a manuscript of three old alphabetical glossaries in the Amplonian Library at Erfurt, the first of the three being of the same text as the Epinal Glossary, in which it fills up the missing letters c, d, e, part

Early English glosses.

* "The Oldest English Texts." Edited, with Introduction and a Glossary, by Henry Sweet, M.A. Published for the Early English Text Society, 1885. Mr. Sweet, whose special studies of the earliest form of English words and sounds have given him throughout Europe a place of honour among students of language, has also edited a *facsimile* of the Epinal Glossary (London, 1883).

of v, y and z. The glossary at Epinal belonged originally to the monastery of Moyen Moutier, near Lenones,* is bound up with the discoveries of St. Augustine. The type of its writing is of the time of the Culdees; its letters being of First English, as written by the Celtic priests who laboured for the conversion of the English. It is ascribed by Mr. Sweet to the end of the seventh century. In the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, there is an extension of this glossary, with many additional words and a stricter alphabetical arrangement—extending, that is, to the second letter of a word. This glossary—the most valuable that we have—is ascribed to the first half of the eighth century, and is marked, in a handwriting perhaps of the thirteenth century, as "Liber Sancti Augustini Cant." It may have been compiled for the school attached to the religious house at Canterbury.

The glossary maker was, in fact, producing a Latin dictionary for use in the interpretation of books read in the school. He copied the glosses on his MSS., and when they were made more accessible for use by alphabetical arrangement, he had beside him as many skins as there were letters of the alphabet, lettered the skins, and copied each word as he came to it on the skin proper to its initial letter. When one skin had been filled with words having the same initial he began another skin. This manner of dictionary making accounts for the entry of Latin nouns and adjectives in oblique cases, and verbs in various moods, tenses, numbers, and persons. In the glossary at Leyden each gloss is even directly entered under the name of the book from which it was taken. But there were also included in these glossaries lists of the Latin and English for groups

* Its English glosses were first published by Mone in 1838, and Mone's transcript was printed in that Appendix B to Mr. Cooper's Report of the Record Commission which contained also transcripts from the then newly discovered Vercelli MS.

of names of plants, birds, beasts, &c., useful to be known by those who were learning to speak Latin. Mr. Sweet believes these glossaries, the first dictionaries in our language, to have been based upon work done for the school at Canterbury.*

* Mr. Sweet's volume of "The Oldest English Texts" contains, beyond the glossaries, a collection of the earliest inscriptions, including that upon the Ruthwell Cross; various readings of the English person and place names in four MSS. of Bede's "Church History," one written about 737, in the public library at Cambridge, in which the forms are Northumbrian, and which has at the end of it the lines Cædmon was said to have made in his sleep, in pure Northumbrian. Of the other three Bede MSS., one of the 8th century is in the town library of Namur; and two—one of the 8th century and one of the first half of the 9th—are among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum. Mr. Sweet adds the Northumbrian Fragments; then gives from the Cotton MSS. the Northumbrian Liber Vitæ of the Church of Durham, which is a list of names of benefactors written early in the 9th century alternately in gold and silver or black. From another MS. there follow lists of bishops and genealogies of kings, which (omitting additions by a later hand) reach to the year 819. There follow, from a MS. in the public library of Cambridge, glosses, in ninth century Kentish dialect, to the "Lorica" of Gildas, and other pieces illustrating the First-English of Kent, including Kentish glosses to the text of Bede in MS. Cott. Tiberius, C, ii. of the end of the 9th or beginning of the 10th century. Next comes, from Cotton MS. Vespasian, A, i., the copy of the Psalms in Latin, known as the Vespasian Psalter, to which Latin Hymns were added, and which was furnished throughout in another handwriting, over both Psalms and Hymns, with an interlinear translation once held to be Northumbrian, but which Mr. Sweet pronounces to be Kentish, and assigns to Canterbury. The collection ends with transcripts of the oldest charters written in English, and of English passages in those written in Latin. It is easy to perceive the value of the general Index Glossary to the whole collection with which this valuable book ends; but it is not easy to estimate the hours of patient and attentive labour that must have gone to the production of the book, which thoroughly maintains the high character of the series, for which we are indebted to the founder of the Early English Text Society. That series steadily proceeds, from year to year, with its generous endeavour to get into print the whole body of unpublished MSS. that represent the English language and its literature in their early forms.

It is also during these days of monastic influence on cultivated English that we find the teachers of religion not only sole masters and creators of the literature, sole representatives of the best mind of England; the records of their life and influence are everywhere sinking deep into the language also. Their most familiar Latin blends with the familiar English of their neighbours, and its adopted words, rubbed down and smoothed by long use, are distinguished technically, as Latin of the Second Period, from the half-dozen words obtained through the Roman occupation in the first instance, as well as from the large body of Latin of the Third Period that came through Norman French. A suggestive part of it is Greek. By the Eastern Church the first monasteries were built; Greek, therefore, and not Latin, is the source of such words as hermit (ἐρημίτις from ἔρημος, desert), anchoret (ἀναχωρητής, a withdrawer), monk (μοναχός, solitary), monastery, minster (μοναστήριον, solitude), cœnobite (κοινὸς βίος, life in common), ascetic (ἀσκητικός, with exercise or discipline), abbot, abbey (from the Syriac, abba, father), alms (ἐλεημοσύνη from ἔλεος, pity). The father of monasticism was Anthony the Coptic hermit; Athanasius, his disciple, was its sponsor in the West. Still, the East held its pre-eminence. The West has never had a Simeon Stylites.

Latin of the Second Period.

But our Greek-English of the monasteries came through the Latin, and is really a part of that Latin of the Second Period which gave to the English language, through the Church, such words as porch (porticus), cloister (claustrum), saint (sanctus), bishop (episcopus), archbishop (archiepiscopus), mass (missa), candle (candela), psalter (psalterium), epistle (epistola), provost (præpositus), pall (pallium), chalice (calix), to preach (prædicare), to prove (probare); and such

How soon its hope will be fulfilled depends upon the measure of support.

names of foreign animals, plants, &c., as lion (leo), camel (camelus), elephant (elephas), fig (ficus), feverfew (febrifugia), parsley (petroselinum), pepper (piper), purple (purpura), pumice-stone (pumex), &c. In other ways, also, the language felt more and more the influence of that close contact with Latin in our literature.

Judith.

In the same manuscript,* which contains the only known copy of "Beowulf," is a fragment—about a fourth part—of another First-English poem, its theme being the Bible story of Judith. The numbering of sections in it shows that we have, in 350 long lines, the end of section IX, and sections X, XI, XII of the original work. Professor Stephens infers, not only from its genuine poetical force, but from its use of a variation in the number of the accents marking changes of emotion, a device found nowhere else in First-English except in Cædmon's Paraphrase, that the shaping of this poem is to be ascribed to Cædmon. Others have found in vivid presentation to the mind of its successive incidents the same suggestion that it was written by the greatest of the First-English religious poets. I will first endeavour to show the plan and character of this important piece by full translation of it into modern English.

FRAGMENT OF JUDITH.

She doubted not the glorious Maker's gifts
In this wide earth; from the great Lord to find
Ready protection when she needed most
Grace from the highest Judge; that He, whose power
Is over all beginnings, with His peace
Would strengthen her against the highest terror.
Therefore the Heavenly Father, bright of mood,
Gave her her wish, because she ever had
Firm faith in the Almighty.
Then heard I Holofernes bade prepare

* Cotton. Vitellius, A, xv.

Wine quickly, with all wonders gloriously
Prepare a feast, to which the chief of men
Bade all his foremost thanes, and with great haste,
Shield-warriors obeyed, came journeying
To the rich lord the leader of the people.
That was the fourth day after Judith, shrewd
Of thought, with elfin beauty, sought him first.

X.

Then to the feast they went to sit in pride
At the wine drinking, all his warriors
Bold in their war-shirts, comrades in his woe.
There were deep bowls oft to the benches borne,
Cups and full jugs to those who sat in hall.
The famed shield-warriors shared the feast, death-doomed,
Though that the chief, dread lord of earls, knew not.
Then Holofernes, the gold friend of man,
Joyed in the pouring out, laughed, talked aloud,
Roared and uproared, that men from far might hear
How the stern-minded stormed and yelled in mirth,
Much bidding the bench sitters bear their part
Well in the feasting. So the wicked one
Through the day drenched his followers with wine,
The haughty Gift Lord, till they lay in swoon ;
His nobles all o'er drenched as they were struck
To death, and every good poured out of them.

So bade the lord of men serve those in hall
Till the dark night drew near the sons of men.
Then bade the malice-blind to fetch with speed
The blessed maid, ring-wreathed, to his bed-rest.
The attendants quickly did as bade their lord,
Head of mailed warriors, in a twinkling went
To the guest chamber, where they Judith found
Prudent in soul, and then shield warriors
Began to lead the pious, the bright maid
To the tent, the high one, where within at night
The chief at all times rested, Holofernes,
Hateful to God the Saviour. There was hung
All golden a fair fly-net round the bed
Of the folk-leader, that the baleful one,
The chief of warriors, might look through on each

Child of the brave who came therein, and none
Might look on him of mankind, save 'twere one
Of his own ill-famed warriors whom the proud one
Bade to draw near, gone in for secret council.
Then they brought quickly to his place of rest
The woman wise of wit ; went rugged men
To make known to their lord that there was brought
The holy woman to his bower tent.

Then was the famed one blithe of mood, the chief
Of cities thought the bright maid to defile
With filth and stain, but that the glorious Judge
Would not allow, who kept the flock of fame,
The Lord, who guides the good, stayed him in that.
Then went the devilish one, with crowd of men,
Baleful, to seek his bed, where he should lose
His prosperous life, at once, within a night ;
There had he to await his end, on earth
A bitter one, such as he in old time
Wrought for himself, while he, bold chief of men,
Dwelt on this earth under the roof of clouds.
So drunken then with wine the king fell down
In the midst of his bed, that counsel he knew none
Within the chamber of his thought. Out from within
Marched with all haste the warriors steeped in wine,
Who led the faithless, hated chief to bed
For the last time. The Saviour's handmaid then
Gloried, intently mindful how she might
Take from the hateful one most easily
His life before the drunkard woke to shame.

Then she of braided locks, the Maker's maid,
Took a sharp sword, hard from the grinding, drew it
With strong palm from the sheath, and then by name
Began to name Heaven's Warden, Saviour
Of all who dwell on earth, and spake these words :
" God, first Creator, Spirit of Comfort, Son
Of the Almighty, glorious Trinity,
I will pray for Thy mercy upon me
Who need it. Strongly is my heart now stirred,
Distressed the mind sorely disturbed with care :
Give to me, lord of Heaven, victory

And true belief, that with this sword I may
Hew at this Giver of Death. Grant me success,
Strong Lord of men, never had I more need
Of Thy compassion; now, O mighty Lord,
Bright minded giver of renown, avenge
What stirs my mood to anger, mind to hate."
He then, the highest Judge, encouraged her
At once with strength, so doth He to each one
Of those here dwelling who seek Him for help
With reason and with true belief. Her mood
Then became unoppressed and renovate
With holy hope; she took the heathen then
Fast by his hair, and drew him with her hands
Shamefully towards her, and laid with skil
The hateful man where she most easily
Might have the wicked one within her power.
She, braided-locked, then struck the scather-foe
With glittering sword, him in whose thought was hate,
That she cut half his neck through, and he lay
In swoon, drunk, with a death wound, but not yet
Was dead, his soul all fled; the woman then,
Famous for strength, with vigour struck again
The heathen dog, so that his head went forth
Upon the floor. Then the foul carcase lay
Empty behind, while the soul went elsewhere
Under the abyss, and there it was condemned,
Tied down to torment ever after, wound
About with serpents, fixed to punishment,
Chained in hell's burning after it went hence.
Nor must he hope at all, in darkness whelmed,
That he can come thence from the serpent's hall,
But there shall dwell ever and ever more
Forth without end in the dark cavern home,
Deprived for ever of the joys of light.

XI.

Great glory Judith then had gained in strife,
As God, the Lord of Heaven, granted her,
Who gave her victory. The clear witted maid
Then quickly brought the leader's bleeding head
Into the bag that her attendant maid,
A pale faced woman, trained to noble ways,

Had carried thither with the food of both,
And Judith, thoughtful minded, gave it then,
So gory, to her maid to carry home.
Then both the women went directly thence
Bold in their strength, exulting in success,
Out from that host, till they might clearly see
The glittering walls of fair Bethulia.

They then, adorned with bracelets, sped on foot
Forth until, glad of mood, they had gone on
To the wall gate. Sat warriors, men on watch,
Kept guard within the fortress, as before
Judith had bidden them in their distress,
The snare-devising maid, famed for her strength,
When she went forth upon her path of war.
Then she was come again, dear to her folk,
And then forthwith the prudent woman bade
Some of the men of the wide burgh go forth
To meet her, and to let her quickly in
Through the wall's gate, and to the victor folk
Spake thus: "I now can tell you of a thing
Worth thanks, that ye no longer need to mourn.
Blithe to you is the Creator, Glory of kings:
Throughout the wide world that has been made known,
That glorious prosperity now shines
Brightly upon you, glory now is given
For all the evils that ye long have borne."
Then were the burghers blithe when they had heard
Over the high wall how the holy maid
Spake to them. In the army there was joy;
The people hastened to the fortress gate,
Women and men together crush and crowd,
In bands, in bodies, thronged and ran, old, young,
Towards the handmaid of the Lord by thousands.
Within that festive city every man
Was gladdened in his spirit when they knew
That it was Judith come back to her home,
Quickly with reverence they then let her in.

The prudent one, adorned with gold, then bade
Her servant, grateful minded, to unwrap
The head of the war chieftain and to the eyes

Of the burghers show it, bloody, as a sign
How she had sped in the contest. Then to all
The people spake the noble woman: "Here,
Men famed for victory, the people's leaders,
Here ye may plainly gaze upon the head
Of the most hated heathen warrior,
The lifeless Holofernes, of all men
He who for us most shaped sore care and death,
And worse would add, but God denied to him
A longer life to afflict us with his feuds.
Through help of God I forced his life from him.
Now my will is to bid each man of you,
Burghers, shield-warriors, that you instantly
Be ready for the fight. When from the east
God the Creator, Holy King, has sent
A ray of light, bear forth your shields on breast,
Fire hardened corslets and bright helms among
The horde of scathers, with your glittering swords
To slay the death-doomed leaders of the folk,
The fated chiefs. Your foes are doomed to death,
And ye have power and glory in the fight,
As through my hand the mighty Lord hath shown you."

Then a bold host was suddenly prepared
Of men keen for the conflict. Famed for courage
Soldiers and nobles marched, bore flags, straight forth
Helmeted men went from the holy burgh,
At the first reddening of dawn, to fight:
Loud stormed the din of shields.
For that rejoiced the lank wolf in the wood,
And the black raven, slaughter-greedy bird;
Both knew that men of the land thought to achieve
A slaughter of the fated ones: then flew
The eagle, dewy feathered, on their track,
Eager for prey, the sallow-coated bird
Sang with its horny beak the song of war.
Warriors, brave men, marched to the battle,
They who not long before suffered reproach
From the foreigners, shame from the heathen. But all
That was hard was repaid at the play of the spears
To Assyria when under their war flags came
The Hebrews to the tents. Then boldly they

Let fly the showers of arrows, snakes of war,
From the horned bows the arrows firm in place;
Loud stormed the angry warriors, spears were sent
Amidst the throng of bold ones, men were wroth,
Men of the land against the hated race,
Marched stern of mood, rugged of mind, to take
Hard vengeance on old foes weary with mead.
The soldiers drew with hands their clear marked swords,
Proved edges, slew the Assyrian warriors
Attempting evil, slew with zeal, spared none
Of all the army, whether wretch or rich,
Of living men whom they could overtake.

XII.

So all the morning-time the kinsman troops
Pursued the stranger on their native soil,
Till the chief watchmen of the host, in wrath,
Saw that the Hebrews strongly showed to them
The swing of swords. They went to make that known
In words to the chief thanes. They roused the highest
And fearfully told him, mead-weary man,
The dreadful tale, the morning's quick alarm,
The cruel edge-play. Suddenly, I heard,
The hero doomed to slaughter leapt from sleep,
And hosts of men sought the pavilion
Of baleful Holofernes, thronged in crowds;
They only thought to offer him their help,
Their lord, before the terror came on him,
The power of the Hebrews. All supposed
The lord of men and the bright maid together
Were in the shining tent, the noble Judith
And he, the lustful, loathsome, terrible.
None was there of the earls who dared to wake
Or learn how it had been to the great chief
With the holy woman the handmaid of God.
Nearer the people of the Hebrews drew,
Fought stiffly with war weapons, hilts, bright swords,
Requited old assaults, all grievances.
In that day's work Assyria was subdued,
Its pride was bowed. Men stood about the tent
Of the chief, much stirred, and gloom was in their minds
Then all together they cried noisily,

Began to clamour loudly, gnash their teeth,
Void of all good, setting their teeth in wrath:
Then was their glory, ease, power, at its end.
The earls thought so to waken their dear Lord,
But not a whit succeeded. Then was found
One of the warriors so resolute
That, hard in hate, within the bower tent
He ventured, as need urged him; on the bed
Found his gold-giver lying pale, soul gone,
Deprived of life. Forthwith he, shuddering,
Fell to the ground, in fierce mood, tore his hair
And his robe too, and to the warriors
Who were outside there, joyless, thus he spake:
"Here we may plainly see our fate foreshown,
Sign given us the time presses near with ills,
When we shall perish all, destroyed in battle.
Here our support, hewn with the sword, lies headless."
They then in bitter mood threw down their arms,
Turned themselves, faint of heart, to haste away
In flight.

Upon their track the folk enlarged in might
Fought till the most part of the army lay
In battle sacrificed, upon the field
Of victory, sword-hewn to please the wolves
And to content the birds that crave for slaughter.
They who yet lived fled from the foemen's arms,
The band of Hebrews followed on their track,
Honoured with victory, enriched with fame.
The Lord God, the Almighty, graciously
Gave them His help. They laboured piously,
The famous heroes, with bright swords to cut
A war path through the press of evil ones,
Hewed shields, cut the defence through, grim in fight
The Hebrew men were shooting, with desire
Strong in the thanes towards the strife of spears.

Here fell in dust the greatest part of all
The number of the nobles of Assyria,
Race of the enemy; few came alive
To their own country. Warriors renowned,
Within the place of slaughter, as they fled,

Turned them to reeking corpses. Room was there
For dwellers on the land to take red spoil
From their most hated foes, now dead, shields fair
Adorned, broad swords, brown helms, and costly cups.
The country's guardians, on the people's land,
Had gloriously overcome the foe
And silenced old oppressions with their swords.
They rested on the path who when alive
Of living men were their worst enemies.

Then for a month's space all men of the tribe,
Greatest of peoples, proud, with plaited locks,
Bore, drew to the bright town, Bethulia,
Helms, hip knives, corslets, the war dress of men
Gold-fretted, treasure more than cunning man
Can tell. All this the people of the land
Won with their strength in fight, bold under banners,
Through Judith's prudent teaching, noble maid.
They, the brave earls, brought from the raid for her,
As her own meed, the sword and bloody helm
Of Holofernes, his breast armour broad
And ornamented with red gold ; and all
Of treasure that the haughty chief possessed,
His heritage of circlets and bright gems,
They gave to the bright woman prompt of thought.

For all this Judith gave to God the praise,
The glorious Lord of men who gave her honour,
Glory in Earth's kingdom, and reward in Heaven,
In the bright skies reward of victory :
Because she had a true belief in God
Almighty, and at the end had not a doubt
Of the reward for which she long had yearned.

For this to latest ages evermore
Be glory unto the dear Lord who made
The wind and air, the heavens and wide earth,
And also the wild streams he made, and He
Through His own mercy made the joys of Heaven.

The numbering of the sections in this poem shows that the whole work followed the course of the book of Judith in

the Apocrypha. The Hebrew book is in sixteen chapters, and the First-English fragment is a poetical version of so much of it as may be found in part of the twelfth chapter, and in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth chapters. The sixteenth chapter, which is not paraphrased, closes the book with a triumphal song, and a glance at the end of Judith's life. The subject was chosen upon the principle that governed the choice of pieces in Cædmon's paraphrase: it was a lesson upon faith in God.

Nebuchadnezzar spread his victories over the world about him. He and his nobles "decreed to destroy all flesh that did not obey the commandment of his mouth." He was "the great King, the Lord of the Whole Earth;" an embodiment of human power. He decreed war against the west country, and sent against it Holofernes, the chief captain of his army, who was to take with him "of men that trust in their own strength, of footmen an hundred and twenty thousand, and twelve thousand archers on horseback. And he arranged them as a great army is ordered for the war. And he took camels and asses for their carriages, a very great number; and sheep and oxen and goats without number for their provision; . . . a great number also of sundry countries came with them like locusts, and like the sand of the earth: for the multitude was without number." And all this force "of men that trust in their own strength" was overcome by a single woman, the fair widow of Manasses who had died of sunstroke in the barleyfield. All incidents of the old Hebrew tale appealed to the imagination with suggestion of the power of God to help those who look to Him for help. The Assyrians waited before Bethulia, the one city of defence placed where there was a narrow pass between the mountains. That pass was the gate through which the strong invaders hoped that they might pour into Judea and destroy Jerusalem. They had cut off the water-supply of

the little city; they had reduced it to the uttermost despair of human help. But Judith put her trust in God; and through her came a full deliverance.

The Jewish tale is of a half barbarous time, and it is recast into the rude life of the northern mead hall, and the war path of the old English distributors of spoil upon the gift stool. In the original tale Holofernes "made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet." There was no drunkenness among his captains, although he himself "drank much more wine than he had drunk at any time since he was born." The author of our old poem paints a banquet at which all the officers of the Assyrian host are drenched with wine, and so laid open to attack by the Bethulians at dawn, before they have recovered from the revel. By this change the poet brings new energy into the tale, for he gives the whole triumph to the men of Bethulia, instead of giving it, as in the original, to a force gathered from "all the coasts of Israel." Incidentally, also, like the author of the old British "Gododin,"* he thus points a lesson against drunkenness. Not only in the succession of clear pictures to the mind, but in the treatment of the material, we recognise in this fragment of Judith the work of a true poet. The most conventional forms of repetition in the structure of our earliest poetry are here always to the point; realising touches abound in the detail of action; and there is a thoroughly artistic use of climax. In the telling of the assault on the Assyrian camp by the men of Bethulia, from suggestions of men whose energies have been deadened by the overnight's debauch the poet leads up gradually to the discovery of the headless body of Holofernes. The confusion spreads from the men to the captains, from the captains to the higher officers, then to the highest under Holofernes, who, as the noise of

* "E. W." I. 225—227.

strife draws nearer, seeks the pavilion, round which others are now pressing. There is no sign from within. Then there is a rising energy of efforts to awaken him without intrusion on his privacy. They begin, I believe—though I have not ventured to translate it so—with coughing,* and advance to louder sounds that rise into despair and gnashing of teeth.

It is to be observed also that the last lines of the fragment were evidently the last lines of the poem. The poet stopped when he had told his story, and left Judith as conqueror presented with the spoils of Holofernes. To the rough men over whom he wished the story to have sway as an encouragement to faith in God this ended all they would care for. He not only leaves out the closing song of Judith, but he does not go on to say that Judith instead of keeping to herself the spoil of Holofernes, which the people had given her, dedicated it "for a gift unto the Lord," although he might reasonably have been tempted to add that; for so old heroes of song, and singers too, had given treasure won by them to their own earthly lords.† Nothing, of course, could have tempted him to close with the prosaic, unessential fact that Judith lived long after she had destroyed the power of Assyria, and died at the age of one hundred and five. He did not sing for the pleasure of the cloister, but for rough men in the world of action, who delighted, as men always will delight, in daring deeds, and who cared little for mere preaching. They liked to hear about the din of battle, and after the battle rich spoils of the battle-field, main source of a warrior's wealth, had a substantial interest. Nothing could follow that would add enjoyment to the

* "Ongunnon cohettan." Cohettan is to make any loud inarticulate noise, and is ancestor of the verb to cough. We have also a dialectic form used as diminutive, which almost repeats the word cohettung, with the old guttural sound of the letter h—"cacketing."

† "E. W." I. 303; II. 10.

telling of the tale in the mead hall, as a substitute for an old heathen war-story, with dramatic changes of voice, action, and accompaniment upon the harp. Here, therefore, the tale ended, with a swift closing reminder of praise due to the Creator. Our First-English poets were religious, but not outwardly meditative. They joined their music to the living energies of the young world they sought to bring to God.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE VERCELLI AND EXETER BOOKS—OTHER REMAINS OF FIRST-ENGLISH VERSE.

A HIGH aim, a thorough sense of what is to be said, and clear simplicity of utterance, we have found, then, to be the earliest characters of Anglo-Saxon English. They give its dignity and worth to Cædmon's Paraphrase, and in greater or less degree they secure respect for all that has remained to us of First-English poetry and prose. The minor poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, written after the establishment of their first monasteries, is almost exclusively religious. The work in hand was the complete conversion of the people; and the monasteries became the great centres of intellectual activity. All the wit of the land, ready for exercise, the priests enlisted in this service. From them there was no demand for, but there was discouragement of, the employment of intellect on other work than that which, in their opinion, tended to extension of God's kingdom. The religious poet enjoyed easy sustenance and zealous publication of his fame. For literature to cleave to the preachers was its worldly interest, and was felt also to be its sacred duty. There seems to be an end, therefore, for the present of the heroic songs in celebration of half-barbarous distributors of rings and bracelets. Not the generosity of Hygelac or Hrothgar, but the tender mercy of God, is the theme of the gleemen. It may be that the extant body of minor Anglo-Saxon poetry would appear less

Minor Poetry of the Anglo-Saxons.

exclusively religious if the collections left to us were not all such as had been made by pious inmates of the monasteries. We must not omit that consideration. Victories may have had their minstrelsy outside the monastery walls. But, on the other hand, the insertion in the Exeter Book of "The Traveller's Song" and "The Lament of Deor," as well as of some secular proverbs or gnomic verses and riddles, shows that there was no formal design to make that collection what it in fact is, a religious one; and what we have is what we might expect. The time had not yet come for religious controversies among the people, or for popular endeavours to bring Christianity and civil government to kiss each other. Mixed, of course, with some credulous acceptance of the fables suited to their day, the First-English poets show, like the early preachers, only a simple, strong desire to spread and deepen through the land a knowledge of the first truths of the Gospel. This general impression of their character will be confirmed even by a very short descriptive list of the remaining poems of the Anglo-Saxons, of which the most important will be afterwards more fully considered.

The Vercelli Book.

In the year 1822, a German Law Professor, Dr. Friedrich Blume, found in a monastery at Vercelli, in the Milanese, a MS. volume of twenty-two First-English sermons, which contained also six ancient poems. He had been travelling in Italy since March, 1821, and visited many libraries. In 1822 he was at Vercelli from October 27 to November 19, and having found in other Italian chapter libraries only Latin and Italian MSS., no Greek even, except in Verona and perhaps Ravenna, he was surprised to find, as he says in his account of his travel, "Iter Italicum," published in 1824 at Berlin and Stettin, a MS. of Anglo-Saxon legends and homilies at Vercelli. How came they there? One suggestion has been that John Scotus Erigena may have stayed in Vercelli and left them there; another,

and more probable suggestion, is from Dr. R. P. Wülker,* who visited Vercelli for the purpose of collating the text of the MS. He found that there had been in Vercelli at an early time a hospitium for Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, one of whom might very possibly have brought the book with him. Blume tells us† that tradition having ascribed the writing of this volume to Eusebius, who died in the year 371, aged eighty-eight, and having been Bishop of Vercelli was called Vercellensis, it was placed among the relics, and leaves were torn out of it, often from among the poetry, as precious gifts for favoured persons. Then, suffering injury from damp, it was removed to a dry place in the sacristy, where it was found in a most wretched condition. By the English Record Commission Dr. Blume was employed to make a copy of the MS., from which the poems were then extracted and printed under the care of Benjamin Thorpe, in an "Appendix B" to Mr. Cooper's Report on Rymer's "Fœdera" for 1836, of which Report a few copies were circulated in 1837, but it was never published. From a copy of this very scarce Appendix, lent to him by Dr. Lappenberg, Jacob Grimm published, in 1840, his edition, with a full introduction and notes, of the two chief poems contained in it—the Legend of St. Andrew and Cynewulf's "Elene," or the Legend of the Finding of the Cross.‡ There is also a fragment of a prose life of St. Guthlac which is found complete in another MS.§ Upon Jacob Grimm's volume Mr. John Mitchell Kemble founded his edition, published in 1844, for the Ælfric Society, of the "Poetry of the Codex Vercellensis, with an English translation: Part I., the Legend of St. Andrew"; followed in 1846 by "Part

* "Anglia," v. 451—465, "Ueber das Vercellibuch."

† "Iter Italicum," vol. i. pp. 99, 100.

‡ "Andreas und Elene, herausgegeben von Jacob Grimm" (Cassel, 1840).

§ Cotton. Vesp. D, xxi.

II. Elene, and Minor Poems." * The six poems of the Vercelli MS. are, in name and order, these: "The Legend of St. Andrew" (in 344 lines); "The Fates of the Apostles" (in 190 lines); "Two Addresses of Souls to the Body" (320 lines), of which the first is extant also in the Exeter Book, and the other is to be found only in the Vercelli MS., where its end is lost, in the same leaf that contained the beginning of the next poem, that (of 92 lines) on the Falsehood of Men. The other two pieces are, "A Vision of the Holy Rood" (310 lines), and "Saint Helen, the Legend of the Finding of the Cross" (a poem in 2,648 lines), which was taken by the poet from the "Acta Apocrypha S. Judæ Quiriaci," of which the Greek original is among the MSS. of the Vatican.†

The Legend of St. Helen.

The Legend of St. Helen, "Elene," tells how the Emperor Constantine, being threatened by hosts of Huns, was comforted in a dream, and saw also a bright cross in the sky, with inscribed letters, telling him that in this sign he should conquer. After his return from victory his majesty inquired which of the gods it was to whom that sign belonged, and, being taught by the Christians in his empire, himself received baptism. He then sent, with a stately company, his mother Helen to the Holy Land to discover the true cross itself. Speaking publicly to the assembled Jews, Helen inquired of them; and the Jews also took large

* These were Numbers V., VI. of the publications of the Ælfric Society. Numbers I. to IV. were Ælfric's Homilies, edited by Benjamin Thorpe. "The Dialogue of Solomon and Saturnus," with some other pieces edited by John Mitchell Kemble, followed the "Elene" in 1848, and an excellent Society was then starved out for want of interest at that time in First-English studies, which were then chiefly maintained in England by Kemble and Thorpe.

† The original legend will be found in the "Acta Sanctorum" of the Jesuit Brothers Henschen and Papebroche, in the first volume of May under May 3, p. 361 (Antwerp, 1680).

counsel together. They gave up to her a wise man named Judas, who might be able to tell her what they did not themselves know. Threat of death or persuasion obtained only from Judas the profession of his ignorance upon a matter that took place so long ago. "And yet," urged Helen, "you can tell me how many men fell at the siege of Troy." Seven days' imprisonment without food obliged this wise man to contrive a confession; so not knowing where the cross had been buried, he led the way to the top of Calvary, and prayed that a sweet smoke might rise from the ground where it lay. The smoke rose, and Judas then confessed faith in the Saviour. He dug twenty feet deep to where the three crosses were buried. They were taken to the queen; and now Judas, who did not know, was asked which of the three crosses was that of the Saviour. He had them all set up with great solemnity, and waited for a sign. A dead man was brought by. Judas placed the corpse against two of the crosses, nothing happening; but the touch of the third restored life. Thus the true cross was found; but the devil was angered bitterly against this second Judas, who was not his friend. And Judas, now become strong in faith, met his assault. Helen went home; but Constantine sent her again to build a church on Calvary. Judas was baptized under the new name of Cyriac, and then Helen became anxious to have by his help not the cross only, but also the sacred nails. They shone like suns from the ground when he sought for them. The nails were made by Helen into a bit for the horse of Constantine, who was thenceforth invincible in battle. But Helen devoted herself to religious duties; and Cyriac became a priest at Jerusalem.

The author of the poem on St. Helen at the end of it speaks in tone of religious lament about himself, and introduces, in a way that must be more fully discussed in the next chapter, his name of Cynewulf in runic letters,

sprinkled among his griefs, as he does also in a poem of his contained in the Exeter Book, roughly thus :—

"C the grieved, plagued with sorrow, though he received the jewel and the twisted gold in the mead hall Y sorrowed. The comrade N bore gnawing grief, binding mystery when the horse [E] before him measured the mile-path, and ran proudly to the adornment of rings. Gone is the wild expectation [W], joy with the years; fled is youth, and the old high spirit. Once U was, years since, the glitter of youth; now the days of the past are gone, and the joy of life like water [L] is parted. Treasures [F] pass away from all under heaven."

The Legend of St. Andrew.

The Legend of St. Andrew, in the Vercelli Book, tells how St. Matthew visited the heathen Mermedonians, a race of cannibal sorcerers, who cast him into prison with a multitude of men and women, and had also put out his eyes and given him drink which compels men to eat grass like the cattle. But Matthew, having prayed that there might be preserved to him the intellect by which he worshipped the Creator, was assured in a vision that St. Andrew would be sent to release him from his misery. St. Andrew was then, in a vision, sent to Mermedonia; and was rowed thither by three men, who were, in fact, the Almighty Himself and two of His angels. On St. Andrew's arrival at the prison of Matthew the guards fell dead, Matthew's sight was restored, and the whole company departed, praising God. The cannibals, coming next day to feast on some of their prisoners, found them gone, and were about to eat one of themselves, but St. Andrew rescued him, heathen as he was, in pity, by miraculously blunting the knives turned against him. A fiend then directed the savages against the saint, who was seized, imprisoned, grievously tormented and reviled of devils. At last, praying for speedy death, he learnt that his martyrdom was accomplished, swept away the worst of his tormentors with a flood, and, having converted and baptised the rest, went back into Achaia.

The Exeter Book is a folio of middle size, given, among other volumes, by Bishop Leofric, between the years 1046 and 1073, to the library of his cathedral at Exeter. Bishop Leofric's library having been scattered after the Reformation, only a few volumes, including this codex of First-English poetry, remain at Exeter; others are in the Bodleian or the library of Benet College, Cambridge. The MS. of the Exeter Book is clearly written, and was new in Bishop Leofric's time, having been written apparently in the first half of the eleventh century. It wants the first seven leaves, several inner leaves, some of the last leaves, and has had an ink bottle spilt over an important passage near the end.* The Exeter Book.

The Exeter Book contains pieces apparently detached which are now regarded as forming a connected poem upon Christ, by Cynewulf,† hymns to the Saviour, to the Virgin, to the Trinity, on the Nativity, Ascension, and Harrowing of Hell; also hymns of praise and thanksgiving; poems on the Day of Judgment and the Crucifixion, and on Souls after Death; a short sermon in verse, and the Legend of St. Guthlac, a metrical paraphrase of the Latin life of St. Guthlac by Felix, a monk of Croyland Abbey. St. Guthlac dwelt in a mountain, where he raised a cross, and was kept pure by an angel, while the fiends whom he had banned from their green hills plotted against him. The poem tells how he stood firm against their terrors and temptations, until his spirit was "led in the embrace of angels to the upper sky; before the face of the Eternal Judge they led him lovingly." The Legend of St. Guthlac.

* It was first published in 1842 by the London Society of Antiquaries as "Codex Exoniensis: A Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, from a MS. in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, with an English translation, notes, and indexes. By Benjamin Thorpe."

† Prof. Dietrich in Haupt's "Zeitschrift," ix. 193—214.

To a faithful disciple, "the beloved man to the beloved," Guthlac said as he was dying—

"Be thou ready for a journey when body and limbs, and this spirit of life, sunder their fellowship through death. Go, after this, on a long way that thou mayst tell to my sister, the fair joy, the most beloved, my departure to an eternal dwelling; and also tell her, in my words, that I denied myself her presence at all times in worldly life; for that I desired that we again might see each other in heavenly glory, sinless, before the face of the Eternal Judge, where our faithful love shall continue, where we ever may enjoy our wishes, happiness with angels, in the bright city. Say to her also that she shall commit to the tomb this bone-case; inclose with clay in its dark chamber this soulless body; there shall it awhile after remain in its earth house."

After this poetical legend of St. Guthlac comes, in the Exeter Book, another paraphrase of the Song of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, which occurs in Cædmon. Then follows a long poem on the myth of the Phœnix, a paraphrase of the "Carmen de Phenice," ascribed to Lactantius, made by one who was among the best of the old Anglo-Saxon poets, in order that he might complete and ennoble it by the addition of a second part which should convert it, point by point, into an allegory of the life of the Christian.

The Legend of St. Juliana.

The next poem in this collection is the Legend of St. Juliana, who maintained her Christian purity, in the days of the tyrant Maximian, against the love of the young heathen Heliseus. Being given up to him by her father Africanus, she bore torments and resisted guiles of the devil, though he came to her in angel's form, with a feigned message from on high. The devil, when fire, scattering itself, would not burn St. Juliana, counselled her persecutor that she should be thrust into a pot of boiling lead; but the pot burst when she was put into it, the scattered lead killed seventy-five of the heathen band, and there was no mark of fire upon her garment. At last, however, Juliana's soul was led to lasting

joy by stroke of sword, and Heliseus and his band all perished in a shipwreck. Then, says the poet of himself:—

"My soul shall go on its journey from my body, I myself know not whither. I shall from this seek another unknown land, according to my past works, for my deeds of old. Sad shall depart **C**, **Y**, and **N**. The King will be stern, the giver of victories, when with sins stained **E**, **W**, and **U** trembling shall await what to him he will doom after his deeds in return for his life. **L F** shall tremble."

Here, therefore, we meet again the author of the Legend of St. Helen.

The next poem of "The Wanderer" is a plaint of the changes or chances of man's life, which leads to an ending with the thought, "Well is it for him who seeketh mercy and comfort of the Father who is in heaven, where all our fastness standeth." The piece copied next into the old MS. book is on the various gifts and pursuits of men, "One here on earth cares for possession of worldly treasure. One is poor, a luckless man, yet he is skilful in the arts of mind. . . . . One is eloquent; one is in hunting chaser of fierce beasts. One is dear to the world-rich men." But the long list leads to and ends with a lesson of the beauty and wisdom of God's works, and how—

"He variously corrects the pride of the children of men and dispenses his gifts; to one in dignities, to one in arts, to one in aspect, to one in war; to one man he gives a tender heart, a well-ordered mind, one to his lord faithful. Thus worthily the Lord widely soweth his goodness; ever, therefore, may He have power and light-bearing praise, who giveth life to us and maketh His tender spirit known to men."

As pure is the Christian spirit of the next poem in this volume, "A Father to his Son." The next is "The Seafarer." * The next poem in the Book sets forth Christian morality, and then "Widsith," already described, precedes

* "E. W." II. 22—26.

the song on the Various Fortunes of Men.* Morality then takes the form of gnomic verses or First-English proverbs. I will give the sense of a few. "The blind of heart shall lose his eyes. He shall not see the bright sun or moon. That will be pain in his mind, inasmuch as he alone knows it." "Hateful is he who claims land, dear he who offers more." "No man gains too much." The following may have been a small strain of domestic song, heard now and then on ship-board :—

"Dear is the welcome guest to the Frisian wife, when the vessel stands, his ship is come, and her husband to his home, her own provider. And she welcomes him in, washes his weedy garment, and clothes him anew. It is pleasant on shore to him whom his love awaits!"

To a song on the Wonders of Creation next succeeds the only known example of a First-English rhyming poem; rhyme otherwise being only found in a few passages of unrhymed poems. The panther is described then in another poem, as a beast with variegated skin like Joseph's coat; of whom it is fabled that when he has eaten food he rests in secret darkness for three nights, and when he wakes refreshed a sweet sound comes from his mouth, followed by an odour more winsome than that of all the flowers. This fable is applied to our Lord, who on—

"The third day rose from darkness. That was a sweet smell, winsome and pleasant all the world through, when to that fragrance soothfast men on every side thronged in crowds from all the round of earth's region. As St. Paul said, 'Manifold over mid-earth are the mercies which the Almighty Father bestoweth on us for our salvation, and the only hope of all creatures above and beneath.' That is a noble savour."

The whale, "Cruel and fierce to seafarers," is also sung; and of him there is a fable that, when hungry, he emits

* "E. W." II. 32—3.

sweet odour from his mouth wherewith he attracts the fishes:—

"Then suddenly around the prey the grim gums crash together. So is to every man who often and negligently in this stormy world lets himself be deceived by sweet odour. . . . Hell's latticed doors have not return or escape, or any outlet for those who enter, any more than the fishes, sporting in ocean, can turn back from the whale's grip."

And the end of all is exhortation to seek peace with the Lord of our salvation.

The address of the Soul to the Body, and the Song of Deor the Bard, precede the closing collection of riddles, contrived to the same moral and religious end, among which are interspersed by the copyist, as of like sense and purport, the Exile's Complaint, nine verses upon the Day of Judgment, the Harrowing of Hell, and a religious Supplication.

Psalms, Hymns, Prayers and other pieces.

In addition to this body of poetry we have other records of Anglo-Saxon verse. A few Anglo-Saxon hymns and prayers are among MSS. in the Cotton Collection * and in the Bodleian.

An Anglo-Saxon paraphrase, partly in prose, partly in verse, attached to a Latin MS. of the Psalms, written in the eleventh century, has been edited by Mr. Thorpe from the original in the Royal Library at Paris.† It has been pointed out by Professor Dietrich ‡ that the metrical paraphrase, from Psalm 51 to 150, was made in the eighth century, perhaps by Aldhelm.

* Three prayers are in Julius, A, ii., and there are a hymn and the 50th Psalm in Vespasian, D, vi. More proverbs are in Tiberius, B, i. 2.

† "Libri Psalmorum Versio Antiqua Latina cum Paraphrasi Anglo-Saxonica partim soluta oratione, partim metrice composita, nunc primum e Cod. MS. in Bibl. Regia Parisiensi adservato descripsit et edidit B. Thorpe, Oxon. 1835."

‡ Haupt's "Zeitschrift für d. Alterthum," ix. 214 222.

A MS. in the British Museum,* first published by Dr. Hickes in his "Thesaurus," contains the Poetical Calendar of the Anglo-Saxons. It was reprinted from Hickes with the addition of a translation and notes by the Rev. Samuel Fox, in the year 1830.† The Calendar is religious, and not pastoral, briefly setting forth in verse, touched with a poetical suggestion of the courses of the seasons, "the times of the saints that men should observe, as the command of the King of the Saxons goeth through Britain at this very time"; the time being, therefore, subsequent to the fusion of the Heptarchy into one kingdom. I give, as an example of its manner—

The Menologium.

"*The Anglo-Saxon Calendar for May.*

"Then quickly comes May round as a guest dainty and fair, with trees and plants in their raiment, and brings magnificently great abundance to the many everywhere. The same day the noble companions, Philip and James, brave fellow-servants, gave their lives for love of God. And then after two nights it is that God revealed to the blessed Helen the noblest of beams on which suffered the King of Angels for love to Man; the Creator on the Cross, by consent of the Father. Thence it is after the space of a week except one night that summer brings to men gem-bright days and warm seasons. Then the fields blossom with early flowers; so that the joy of many kinds of the living ascends through mid earth, gives praise to the king, manifoldly calling on the glorious Almighty. Then it is after the number of eight days and nine that the Lord took Augustine into the other light, happy in heart because here in Britain he had made earls obedient to him for the will of God, as the wise Gregory commanded him. I have not heard that before him any other man or more illustrious bishop ever brought better lore over the briny sea. He now rests in Britain among the men of Kent in the chief city, near the celebrated Minster."

* Cotton Collection, Tiberius, B, i.

† "Menologium, seu Calendarium Poeticum, ex Hickesiano Thesauro; or, The Poetical Calendar of the Anglo-Saxons, with an English Translation and Notes," by the Rev. Samuel Fox, M.A. (London, 1830).

A fragment of a fine poem on the Grave is written in the margin of a volume of Homilies in the Bodleian Library.* A poem of "Salomon and Saturn," in the form of dialogue, exists in two manuscripts, both defective. One, in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge,† contains the poem from verse 30 to verse 306; the other, in the same collection,‡ is a copy of Alfred's Beda, with verses 1—94 of "Salomon and Saturn" written on its margin. Mr. Kemble has edited this work for the Ælfric Society.§ Saturn, in the poem, seeking from Salomon knowledge of the Paternoster, is instructed of its virtues, and those of the word of God, which is golden, stoned with gems, and silver-leaved. Among the successive letters of the word Paternoster, power is distributed; and thus in mystical way, according to a humour of the East, there is represented contest between the Paternoster and the Devil, who, as a prose continuation of the dialogue sets forth, will take thirty shapes, and be met in each by the Pater Noster. In answer to questions of Saturn, "What kind of head hath the Pater Noster?" "What is the Pater Noster's beauteous heart like?" "But what is his garment like?" Salomon replies in strains of Eastern hyperbole. In the second part of the poem Salomon and Saturnus exchange at random metrical proverbs or wise counsels in a dialogue that does not aim much at coherence. Among spurious books of Scripture was a "Contradictio Salomonis," withdrawn from the Canon in the fifth century by Pope Gelasius; and of this, or some work like it, the Anglo-Saxon poem of "Salomon and Saturnus"—wholly wanting the characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon mind—may have been a version.

Salomon and Saturn.

* MSS. NE. F, 4, 12. † MSS. No. 422. ‡ MSS. No. 41.

§ "The Dialogue of Salomon and Saturnus, with an Historical Introduction," by J. M. Kemble (London, 1848).

CHAPTER IX.

CYNEWULF.

CYNEWULF the poet was unknown until the runes were read by which he had worked his name into his poem of "Elene." Those runes were first read in the year 1840 by two independent workers—by Jacob Grimm in his edition of "Andreas" and "Elene," and by John Mitchell Kemble in his essay upon Anglo-Saxon Runes, published that year in the "Archæologia."

Cynewulf: The finding of the name.

Each discoverer of the names endeavoured also to find who Cynewulf was, and when he lived. Grimm placed him in the eighth century. Kemble placed him in the end of the tenth century and the beginning of the eleventh, by suggesting that he was the Cynewulf who was Abbot of Peterborough between the years 992 and 1006, who succeeded Ælfeage as Bishop of Winchester in the year 1006.

Who was he? Kemble's suggestion.

That was a time of ravage of this country by the Danes, who burnt Ipswich in 991, and were then first bought off by the advice of Archbishop Siric; it was the time of massacre of Danes on St. Bride's Day, and of the following years of vengeance; the time of the sack of Canterbury, and of a continuous decay of learning. Even from such times as those there have come down to us some touches of the spirit of our fathers in a battle song; but they were not times for the leisurely production of religious poems, in

the narrative form of the eighth century. For Cynewulf is not only the author of "Elene." His name is signed in like manner to a piece which forms the close of a connected poem on the Coming of Christ—His Coming to Earth; His Ascent into Heaven; and His Coming Again to Judgment. Cynewulf has worked his name also with runes into the Legend of Juliana. These works certainly are his. Also he has been supposed, on no good grounds, to be the author of some or all of the First-English riddles in the Exeter Book, and many more small poems have been fathered upon him.

J. M. Kemble's identification of the poet with Cynewulf Abbot of Peterborough was supported by Thomas Wright and by Benjamin Thorpe. Thorpe pointed out that in one of Ælfric's sermons it is written that all creatures knew the coming of Christ, except only the base Jews; and that in Cynewulf's "Crist" it is written of the Jews, blind of thought, unteachable and confounded in error, when they crowned the Saviour with thorns,—that then they saw how the dumb creation, the green Earth, and the Heavens above, felt with dread the throes of their Lord, and expressed their sorrow though they had no life. There is no great resemblance between these passages, but there is the thought in each that dumb creation knew Christ when the Jews did not; and upon this ground it was argued, and by some agreed, that Cynewulf's "Crist" was later than Ælfric's sermons. The before-named Abbot of Peterborough might, therefore, fairly be regarded as the poet.

But in 1853* Franz Dietrich pointed out that Ælfric and Cynewulf both drew from an earlier source. This was the tenth Homily of Pope Gregory the Great; and a preceding section, forming a considerable part of the "Crist," was a free poetical version of another of Pope

* Haupt's "Zeitschrift," vol. 9. "Ueber 'Crist.'"

Gregory's sermons. Of that earlier reference to blindness of the Jews let us not speak without remembering that the first Pope Gregory opposed with all his power the cruelties of Christians towards Jews. He said that infidels were to be brought to the Christian faith by gentleness, by kindness, by right teaching, and not by threatenings and fear. None of the Fathers of the Church had more visible influence upon our early literature than this pope, who sent Augustine into England.

Pope Gregory died in the year 604. All arguments from language are against the belief that Cynewulf wrote at the end of the tenth century. He ceased, therefore, to be identified with the Abbot of Peterborough when Dietrich turned the supposed citation from Ælfric into a citation from Gregory. And of Cynewulf as Abbot of Peterborough there is no more to be said.

Let us go back now to the opinion expressed by Jacob Grimm, the other discoverer of Cynewulf's name. Jacob Grimm suggested that Cynewulf wrote in the eighth century, and had possibly been trained in the school of Aldhelm. But Jacob Grimm stopped there. He did not seek to identify the poet with any man whose name is otherwise on record.

Jacob Grimm's suggestion.

Grimm's view was expressed in the introduction to his edition of "Andreas" and "Elene," which he addressed to Friedrich Blume, the discoverer and transcriber of the poems of the Vercelli Book. The poems had been printed from his transcript, under the superintendence of Benjamin Thorpe—a fact not known to Grimm, but inferred by him from the skill shown by the London editor—in the Appendix B of Mr. Cooper's "Report to the Record Commission" (1837). The Appendix was seen only by a few; Dr. Lappenberg had obtained a copy of it and sent it, in 1840, to Jacob Grimm. Grimm thought he saw in "Andreas" and "Elene," next to "Beowulf," the

oldest and most instructive remains of Anglo-Saxon poetry; and within the year he published the two poems at Cassel, with his introductory comments.

In the old First-English Church legends Jacob Grimm recognised a freer union of the spirit of the people with its literature than in the "Heliand." The new life was poured into the old popular forms of poetry. Take away, he said, Scripture names and names of saints, and much of "Andreas" or "Elene" might be read as song and saga of old heathen times. That is true. From Cynewulf on, for centuries, saints' legends supplied the need in us of food for the imagination; and the tales of wonder were the more enjoyed when they were told after the old ways. There was, in Cynewulf, the old association of wolf, eagle, and raven with the path of battle, and the old epithets were applied to them; there was the old treatment of battle scenes, there were the old boars' crests over the helms, with other traces from old heathen worship; there was the whole wealth of poetical suggestion in names for the sea, and in images drawn by a race of sailors from the sea and from seafaring. Jacob Grimm noted also the old sense of nature in truth of such touches as those which suggest approach of a storm at sea, approach of night, or of dawn, aspects of home; in all this there was harmony with the first traces of Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon life and energy.

Looking then to the handwriting of the Vercelli manuscript, of which there was the facsimile of a page in the unpublished Appendix to the "Report of the Record Commission," Grimm ascribed the writing, although not with clear certainty, to the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century. In the language he thought that he found more words used in their elder forms than in the text of Beowulf and Cædmon. Especially he pointed out the frequency of reduplicated forms of past tenses,

which might have been retained in poetical narrative after they had suffered contraction in common speech, but which became less common in the later forms of First-English.

Having read the name of Cynewulf from the runes, and observed that it may have been the name of many Anglo-Saxons, Jacob Grimm inferred from the poet Cynewulf's citation of "the books" for authority, that as a well-read man he must have been a priest. He could not have been the West Saxon King Cynewulf who was murdered in the year 784; still less the Mercian King Coenwulf, who is also written Cenulf and Cynulfas.

Did Aldhelm write *Andreas?*

But if the author of "Andreas," who is not identified by interwoven runes, be not the Cynewulf who wrote "Elene," then could he have been Aldhelm? Towards the close of "Andreas" there is a passage in which the poet, saying that he means to tell the last incidents briefly, wrote, as Jacob Grimm translated him—taking the word "git" as the dual form for "ye two"—"however ye two shall tell in small fragments the last part of the song," where "reccan" is the word for tell.* Here, said Grimm, if "reccan" mean to tell or recite, the two addressed by the word "git" must be two persons—gleemen—by whom the tale was to be told. But if "reccan," as Grimm rather thought, was here to be taken in the sense of reading the tale, then the two could point only to those for whom the poem was first written. These might be, probably, a king and his queen, who had assigned the subject to the poet. If so, the king and queen might be Ina, King of Wessex, and his wife Æthelburg. But Aldhelm was to that King Ina friend and counsellor.

* "Andreas," lines 1487-9 :—

—— "hwæðre git sceolon
lytlum sticcum leoðworda dæl
furður reccan."

Aldhelm's Anglo-Saxon poems are lost. What if "Andreas" were one of them?

Aldhelm came out of the school of Canterbury, from which Archbishop Theodore spread knowledge of Greek. And "Andreas" was based upon a Greek original of the acts of Andrew and Matthew (*πράξεις Ἀνδρέου καὶ Ματθαίου*), which Jacob Grimm found after search for a better source of the song than the two sources first known to him. There is more fulness of detail found in the First-English poem of "Andreas" than is to be found in the Golden Legend, or in the apostolical histories ascribed to an Abdias of Babylon —for whom it was claimed that he had seen Christ, and been one of the seventy-two disciples—though the groundwork of this legend of Andrew was to be found in both these books. Aldhelm was dead in the year 709. "Andreas" might well have been written at the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth century.

As "Elene" could not be of much later date, Cynewulf might then be regarded as having lived in Aldhelm's time, and it was very possible that he might have been under Aldhelm in Malmesbury. Also for the "Elene" there was a Greek original to be sought. The Latin form would have been Helena. Those were the suggestions made by Jacob Grimm in 1840, suggestions which he thought not groundless, although their confirmation must depend on subsequent research.

The runes in "Juliana" and the latter part of the poem on Christ proved, of course, without further question, that the same Cynewulf was author also of those poems.

An attempt was made towards further identification of the works of Cynewulf, in 1857, by Heinrich Leo, in a clever thesis read before the University of Halle,* on what the Anglo-Saxon poet Cyne-

Did Cynewulf write the Riddles?

* Heinrich Leo died on the 24th of April, 1879, at the age of eighty, after a long, wasting illness. His first great interest was in

wulf has told us about himself—"*Quæ de se ipso Cynevulfus (sive Cenevulfus, sive Coenevulfus) Poeta Anglo-saxonicus tradiderat.*" The alternative spellings on his title-page are given because they form part of his argument that Cynewulf was a Northumbrian. Whether Cynewulf was a Northumbrian remains open to question; but the chief interest of Leo's thesis lay in the fact that it seemed to prove—though we shall find it did not prove—that the first of the Anglo-Saxon riddles in the Exeter Book, which had until then been found insoluble, had for its answer nothing less than CYNEWULF, the author's name. If that was so, then Cynewulf wrote riddles. He wove his name into the first riddle of the collection in the Exeter Book. Did he write them all?

Cynewulf in the Runes.

Leo's question concerned Cynewulf's information about himself as it was found associated with the signing of his name. We will speak of the runes first, then of the riddles. Each runic letter was called after some object of which the name began with the sound that letter was to stand for. Cynewulf might, therefore, in putting the letters of his name into runic form, regard them simply as letters or treat them also as words carrying their part of the sense of his lines.

The letters were named Cên, a torch; Yr, a bow; Nýd, need or sorrow; Eoh, a horse; Wên, hope or ex-

history, and his first book, published at the age of one-and-twenty, was on the constitution of the free cities of Lombardy in the Middle Ages. He was drawn by the influence of Jacob Grimm to a study of the earliest Teutonic form of language, especially to Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon. As he learnt he taught. He was a *Privat-docent* at Halle for more than forty years. His last work was an Anglo-Saxon Glossary, published in 1872, when health was failing, and arranged with reference to derivations in a way that would have defeated its purpose as a dictionary if it had not been provided with a most minute and accurate Alphabetical Index by Walter Biszegger, under the superintendence of Moritz Heyne.

pectation; Ur, wild ox or bison; Lagu, sea or water-stream; Feoh, money, chattels.

Jacob Grimm had, in lines 1258–1270 of "Elene," read some of the runes as words forming a part of the sense, and others as interpolated letters. Cên, he said, was used only as the letter C, Yr only as Y; Nýd, Eoh, and Wên carried their sense as words; Ur was used only as a letter; Lagu and Feoh were also significant as words of the sentence. Leo suggested that Grimm may have been hurried in the finishing of his work, or he would not have been content till he had read all the names of the runes, instead of five out of eight, as significant parts of this passage. I translate the whole passage at the close of "Elene," in which Cynewulf speaks of himself, including in it Heinrich Leo's reading of all the eight runes into words that form part of the sense.

Thus I old and ready to leave this unsteady
Ill house of the flesh.

Rhymes in *Elene.*

But here is rhyme. This passage in which Cynewulf speaks of himself as a poet, has its first thirty half lines rhyming together,* most of them with full rhyme, some

Þus ic fród and fús þurh þæt fæcne hús
wordcræft wæf and wundrum læs,
þrágum þreodode and geþanc reodode;
nihtes nearwe nysse ic gearwe
be þáre róde riht, ár me rúmran geþeaht
þurh þa mæran miht on modes þeaht
wisdom onwráh. Ic wæs weorcum fáh,
synnum asæled, sorgum gewæled,
bitrum gebunden, bisgum beþrungen,
ár me láre onlag þurh leohtne hád
gamelum to geoce, giſe unscynde.
mægencyning amæt and on gemynd begeat,
torht ontynde, tídum gerymde,
báncofan onband, breóstlocan onwand
leoðucræft onleác, þæs ic lustum breác.

of them with rhymes of assonance, and with a few irregularities in their occurrence.

The manner of this rhyming shows that it is an echo of the Latin rhyming verse* into which the monks had been led by the recurrence of like forms of inflexion.

In such rhymes, then, Cynewulf begins to tell how, old and ready to quit his infirm house of clay, he wove verses, and thought and thought and turned over his thoughts carefully in the night, and did not rightly know the story of the Cross, until his mind was enlarged by the thought within which unveiled wisdom. "I was stained by my deeds, possessed by sins, vexed with sorrows, bound with bitterness, pressed upon by cares, until the Almighty gave me knowledge, brought me into light for the comfort of age, poured into my spirit the pure gift, kindled the brightness, freed me from bondage of this earthly frame, opened the breast, unlocked the power of song, which then I used with pleasure in the world." Cynewulf's intent thought upon high song, that at last separates the poet from all cares of the world and brings the light of Heaven into his mind, enlarging it until it breaks the bounds of flesh and sends with joy its light into the world, has in it the true poet's sense of his calling. It is akin to the later voice of a blind poet, bound more strictly by the prison of the flesh, who sang—

Cynewulf in the Runes.

"So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers

* As in these verses from Æthelwald to Aldhelm :—

Vale, vale fidissime,
Phile Christi charissime
Quem in cordis cubiculo
Cingo amoris vinculo ;
Ave, ave, altissime,
Olim sodes sanctissime,
Salutate supplicibus
Æthilwaldi cum vocibus.

Irradiate; there plant eyes*; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

Then Cynewulf goes on to tell how, not once but many times, he fixed his mind upon the Cross of Glory, as in books, according to the course of words made known by writing, he found the sign of victory. Here follows the interweaving of the runic signature :—

Till then the man was ever pressed with cares
A failing torch [Cên], though treasures he received
In the mead hall, wrought gold. The fall [Yr] of powers *
Forced lamentation, comrade of distress [Neod]
Close in his secret thought † bore narrow care,
Where once the horse [Eoh] had measured the mile ways
Upon the road, pressed wildly, proud in chains.
The wild hope‡ [Wên] is abated, joyous sport,
When years have passed, youth turns, exults no more.
Gold [Ôr] § was youth's glory once, the days have now
Fled forth after the spaces of their time
Life's joy departed as the sea [Lagu] streams on,

* Leo does not take Yr as meaning a bow. He says, "ÿr non yr hic legendum—nam non arcum hoc in loco designet littera runica, sed ÿr pronuntiari etiam potest vox eàr, qua voce sæpissime alia ac plane diversa, littera runica indicatur. Eàr vero significat statum senectute, morbo, vulnere, &c., collabentem." Yr, Leo adds, certainly means a bow, but Cynewulf brought into use the other rune ear by spelling it ÿr, and that he did so is shown by his joining the word with need (ÿr and neád) in two other passages.—"Cod. Exon." ed. Thorpe, p. 50 and p. 284.

† Enge *rúne.*

‡ Leo reads Wên into Wahn, but desire or expectation of youth cooled by the course of years makes better sense.

§ Leo here substituted Ôr for ur. Ur and ôr, he says, were pronounced alike; ur means a bison; there were no bisons in England, and they could have, therefore, no place in the poet's life. Ôr, he says, is a northern word for money, often used in the ecclesiastical laws of the Northumbrians, as "gif preost bisceopes âgen geban forbuge, gilde xx. ôr."

The hasting waves. Wealth [Feoh] is to everyone
Under the sky a thing that passes. All
The land's adornments fly under the clouds,
Like to the wind when rising with loud roar
On men, it hunts the clouds, goes forth in storm,
And then is hushed to stillness, closely pressed
In narrow cave, there forcibly constrained.*

The world passes and judgment comes; so the poem closes with the Judgment Day; and its last words are of Christ's reward to those who have done well upon earth, and have called upon His name.

From the references to himself at the close of "Elene" we learn, then, that Cynewulf when he wrote that poem was old. He searched in books that he might sing of victory through the Cross. But he does not say that he was priest or monk; and he does speak of himself as a scóp who has received gifts in the mead hall.†

The runes giving the name of Cynewulf in the third part of the "Crist" are also associated with Christ's coming to judgment :—

There to the assembly many will be brought
Before the face of the Eternal Judge.
Then will the bold [Cên] quake, hearing the King speak,
The Heavenly Judge, speak words severe to those
Who in the world paid light heed to His voice
When fall [Yr], distress [Neod] found comfort easily.
There many a one on the assembling place
In fear shall sadly wait what doom of wrath

* Here Leo suggested Cynewulf's acquaintance with a passage in Virgil :—

"Hic vasto rex Æolus antro
Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frenat."

Imprisonment of the winds belonged only, he said, to Greek and Roman mythology.

† One critic, however, has suggested that we may take the "leohtne hád" in the passage (p. 213) as a poetical phrase for the priesthood.

He shall receive according to his deeds.
Desire [Wên] shall fail, the treasures of the earth.
Gold [Ôr] was for long, locked by the ocean [Lagu] floods *
Part of the joy of life, wealth [Feoh] upon earth.
Then burn the treasures in the balefire, high
Rises the brightness of the torch, red fire
Strides through the wide world cruelly; plains fall
In wreck, foundations of the boroughs burst,
Fire is let loose, destroying pitiless
Our ancient treasures, greediest of ghosts.

The runes in the poem of "Juliana" simply express a breaking of the name into three parts: C, Y, and N; E, W, and U; L, F, to be used successively in one sentence as signs of personality. But it is not without significance that again Cynewulf connects his name with the awaiting of the last judgment that will reward him according to his deeds. Monk or not, he was God's soldier, with a deep sense of responsibility for right use of his opportunities and powers.

Leo, however, seeks even here to make every rune significant. He reads C, Y, N, into cèn, yr, and neád, which he interprets wasting sickness, failure, and distress. E, W, and U, into Eoh, Wên, and Ôr, horse, mad-desire, and money; L, F, Lagu, Feoh, and translates "L, F beofaŏ" (L, F trembles), "a changing wave [L] shakes riches [F]."

We come now to the first riddle, in which Leo more than once diverges from the natural reading. Where others translate the first noun, "leodum," "people," he alters the word into leoŏum, and translates it "limbs;" and the second noun, "lác," in the

Cynewulf in the Riddles?

* Leo here suggests confirmation of his very questionable reading *Ôr* for *Ur*; and to explain "locked by the ocean floods" says that the English, being islanders, had to bring their gold home from over sea. *Ur*, he says, would make no sense here. Gold or money is the conception to be expressed, and Ôr is the one word that will do it. In this piece, also, the word Cêne is read as another word than that which is translated torch.

first line, which means "gift," or "offering," he translates, for his own convenience, "meaning."

> "It is to my people as if a man gave them gifts,
> They will receive him if he come into the throng."

So others read; but Leo makes the riddle begin by saying,

> "My limbs are related, as one gives them meaning
> They will disclose it, when the meanings join the throng
> [*i.e.*, come together]."

Here the limbs are said to be the two related syllables of the name which is the subject of the riddle. Each syllable is then riddled by the use of its sound in different senses. The riddle proceeds with speech of the first syllable; the separation of the syllable is figured by placing each upon an island:—

> "It is unlike with us.
> A wolf is on one island, I on the other.
> The island is wholly surrounded by fen;
> Fierce men [that is *Cêne*] are here on this island,
> They will make it [the sense of the riddle] clear
> when the meanings join in one."

Here the rune "cên," a torch, is to be read as "cêne," keen or fierce men, and we are to take "cêne" as the rune hidden in the word "wælhreowe" which involves ideas of passion and slaughter. In the next section a new sense is given to the word cêne; it is no longer keen, bold, fierce, but coen, for cwen, a queen, or woman, who is in love with a man named Wulf. And thus it reads:—

> "It is unlike with us.
> I give myself far-wandering longings towards my Wolf.
> When it was wet weather and I sat weeping,
> Then the brisk warrior embraced me with his arms;
> That was bliss to me, but also it was pain.
> Wolf, my Wolf, my longings towards thee

Have brought me sickness, thy seldom coming
The mourning mood, not want of meat.
Hearest thou? Eadwaccer, the whelp of us both,
Carries a wolf to the wood."

Here it is guessed that Eadwaccer, who belongs to both syllables, represents the particle *e* that joins the syllables cyn and wulf. The wolf carried to the wood is "Wulf," taken by E(adwaccer) to Cyn, because wood points to the word "cên," which means split wood. The riddle then ends with the note—

It is easy to separate what never was joined,
Our song together,

where there is suggested play on "cêne" and "coen" in the sense of cantus.

This reading has been widely accepted as right in the main, though in some parts unduly forced; and upon the strength of it the riddles in the Exeter Book have been ascribed, all, or in part, to Cynewulf. Leo's unriddling was ingenious, but so far-fetched and fanciful that it would hardly require more freedom of conjecture to make the answer to the riddle anything one would. An answer to be right must be much simpler. No man born of woman would, with the natural wit to which riddles appeal, go through such a process of interpretation as is here suggested. Moritz Trautmann has raised fourteen objections to it.* They are not all of them good, but fewer are sufficient. Plays upon syllables of words in this charade-form are, he says, not to be found in the old collection; "leód" and "lác" are twisted out of their right meaning to make a wrong suggestion that the riddle plays on syllables of a word. Riddles of old were to the ear, not to the eye. In the runic signatures the name is always Cynewulf; that the riddler would turn the short y

* "Anglia," vol. vi. "Cynewulf und die Rätsel," pp. 158-169 of the "Anzeiger."

into ŷ, or e, or into oe, as a Northumbrian equivalent for w, is not to be believed. There is no adequate interpretation of the line that surrounds the island with fen. To suppose that rational men would see "cêne" in "wælhreowe," and "cên" in "wudu," argues want of reason in the riddle-maker. In the sixth line words meaning "there on that island" are read "here on this island," to prevent the supposed syllables from being mixed.

Leo took his reading of "wolf" for "wulf" by his change of ur into ôr, as corroboration of Grimm's inference from the language of his poems that Cynewulf was a Northumbrian. Dietrich pointed to the Northumbrian Gospels, which showed that the Northumbrian form was "wulf, not "wolf;" he argued, therefore, that wolf proved nothing, and that the change of the rune "ur" into another form which is Icelandic rather than Anglo-Saxon—except as "ora," the eighth part of a mark—was unjustifiable; "ôr" occurs only in the Northumbrian laws for priests, where it represents a fixed sum, as a contracted form of ora.

Was Cynewulf a Bishop of Lindisfarne?

Dietrich inferred, however, the Northumbrian origin of Cynewulf from his supposed association with the lines upon the Ruthwell Cross; and thought it very likely that he was the Cynewulf who was Bishop of Lindisfarne from the year 737 to the year 780, when he withdrew into seclusion, dying soon afterwards in the year 782. Eleven years afterwards, in 793, the Danes landed in Northumbria, sacked churches, slew priests, and wrecked the mother church at Lindisfarne. That Cynewulf Bishop of Lindisfarne was driven out of his see in the year 750 by King Eadbert and spent several years in exile. To Cynewulf, therefore, and to that time Dietrich ascribed, upon such grounds, a prayer in the Exeter Book that begins with a "God help me!"—Ahelpe min se hálga dryhten!" Dietrich suggested also that Cynewulf might have been born at Ruthwell, and that he wrote not only all the riddles in the

Exeter Book, but also "Andreas," "Guthlac," "The Phœnix," "The Panther," "The Whale," and "The Vision of the Cross." C. W. M. Grein* accepted the identification of Cynewulf with the Cynewulf who was Bishop of Lindisfarne in the eighth century, and continuing speculation in the direction to which Dietrich pointed, ascribed to him eight more poems than Dietrich had claimed for him. Grein also, in part by

* Christian Wilhelm Michael Grein died at Hanover in June, 1877. He was born in 1825; the son of a small official at Willengshausen in Upper Hesse. He studied at Marburg both at the gymnasium and in the university; studied also at Jena natural history and mathematics. Having qualified for the office of teacher in a gymnasium, he was appointed in 1850 to teach in the gymnasium at Rinteln. While studying natural history he had acquired also a strong interest in the study of Teutonic language. At Rinteln he made this study the occupation of his leisure; and in 1854 he published a translation of the "Heliand" into alliterative verse. Appointment to a small post in the library at Cassel gave Grein more leisure to pursue his studies of Anglo-Saxon, at which he was one of the first hearty workers. In 1857 he began, and he completed in 1864, a "Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie in kritisch bearbeiteten Texten und mit vollständigem Glossare herausgegeben," which made the whole body of Anglo-Saxon more easily accessible to students; adding a glossary so full in its references to the lines in which the words occurred, that it could serve also fairly well as a concordance to the texts. Appreciation of this work won for Grein an influential friend, who got him employment from 1857 to 1860 in the sorting of archives at Bückeburg, that were the common property of Kur Hesse and Waldeck. In 1858 he obtained his Doctor's degree at Marburg for a critical edition of the "Hildebrandslied"; and in 1859 he was appointed Assistant in the Marburg University Library. In 1865 he became Keeper of the Archives at Cassel. In 1870 the archives were removed from Cassel to Marburg, and Grein's duties brought him back to his old university. He taught again, but there was no vacant professor's chair that he could fill. He was made an Extraordinary Professor, *honoris causa*, and continued, with failing health, his active literary work. In 1876 he was withdrawn from Marburg by being made Keeper of the Archives at Hanover, and there he died in the next year. Among living students of Anglo-Saxon there are many who would hardly have found their way into the study but for Grein.

inference from poems that were not proved to be his, gave increased fulness to a conjectural sketch of Cynewulf's life.

There is a poem often ascribed to Cynewulf—the Vision of the Holy Rood—from which the lines inscribed upon the Ruthwell Cross were taken. But as Cynewulf's authorship rests only upon doubtful conjecture it will be described in the next chapter with other remains of First-English poetry, many of which, for want of other known authors, have been guessed into the life of Cynewulf.

Cynewulf's authorship of the first riddle in the Exeter Book, if it were established upon safe ground, as it is not, would hardly make it certain that he wrote the rest. There are about ninety riddles in all; eighty-nine as arranged by Grein; ninety-three as printed by Thorpe; ninety-five according to the breaks in the manuscript; and they were not copied consecutively, but occur in three different sections. From the first to the fifty-ninth they stand together; three, of which one was shown by Grein to be no riddle, are inserted after other matter; and the last twenty-eight form a third collection. The riddling is of the school of Aldhelm, who, as we have seen, imitated the enigmas of "Symposius," or the Symposium ascribed to Lactantius and sometimes to the youth of Tertullian. By confining his ingenuity to simple homely themes Aldhelm gave impulse to the making of riddles in the native tongue as well as in Latin. Forty Latin riddles of Tatwine were also increased to a hundred by Eusebius. All these sources are used by the First-English riddle makers. August Prehn,* in continuance of study of the sources of the riddles, tabulated results which show that a considerable number of the First-English riddles were recast from Latin originals; that among these most use was made

Cynewulf in the Riddles?

* "Komposition und Quellen der Rätsel des Exeterbuches," being the third part of "Neuphilologische Studien," edited by Prof. Gustav Körting (Paderborn, 1883).

of Aldhelm; that next to Aldhelm the chief use was of the riddles of "Symposius"; that there was less use of Eusebius, and least of Tatwine, while sometimes several Latin riddles were run into one. After these have been separated from the other riddles in the Exeter Book there remain many which may be regarded as original, or borrowed from the people. They reflect many features of our old national life, and blend with Christian teaching so much delight in joys of war, and music, and full cups, that they cannot all be regarded as the work of priest or monk. It is suggested, therefore, that if they were Cynewulf's, and Cynewulf became Abbot of Lindisfarne, he wrote them in the free days of his youth.

About a score of the riddles in the Exeter Book had been answered, when Franz Dietrich* made them a subject of special study, and put forth answers to many of those which had been given up. Dietrich argued that two riddles besides the first referred to Cynewulf as their maker. They were the Latin riddle numbered 76 in Grein's collection, where the word "wulf" occurs four times; and the last in the series, which figures, he says, the Wandering Singer, that is to say, Cynewulf himself, in his vocation. Moritz Trautmann questioned also these suggestions, bnt they have obtained general acceptance, and have caused many critics to regard Cynewulf's authorship of all the riddles as a settled question. Dietrich argued with an ingenuity more elaborate than Leo's, and less convincing, that the answer to the first riddle was not CYNEWULF but THE RIDDLE; the thing played upon in words being in each case simply the conception of a riddle. Thus he reads the first:—It is to my people (that is, to us riddles) as if one brought them gifts; they will receive him when he comes to them (as one does not send away a man who brings gifts, so we riddles receive,

* "Die Rätsel des Exeterbuches, Würdigung, Lösung, und Herstellung": in volumes xi. and xii. of Haupt's "Zeitschrift."

by admitting ourselves to be guessed, the man who guesses us; as it is agreeable to receive gifts, so it is agreeable to us riddles to be guessed). The wolf who seeks to seize me (the riddle) is the man who is guessing. He is on one island, I on the other (riddle and guesser are divided from each other). The island (where the wolf or guesser is) is surrounded by fen (difficulties in the way of the finding out). On that island (where the wolf or guesser is) there are wild fighting men (that is, with the guesser who does guess them there are others who struggle to guess and do not succeed). I was sorry for my wolf's wide-reaching desires (for the guesser being so far out with his guesses). Then it was rainy weather for men, and I wept. When the swift in battle embraced me with his arms (when he guessed me) I was glad, yet in pain too (for a riddle will be guessed and also will not be guessed). Wolf, my wolf, thy mad expectation (bad guesses), thy seldom coming (seldom getting near to a good guess), have made my mind sick; my spirit was sad, in no way for want of food. Hearest thou? Eadwaccer, the whelp of us both, carries the wolf to the wood (that is, hearest thou? as soon as the answer is given, the riddle is guessed). It is easy to tear asunder what was never joined (it is easy to break away the answer from the riddle, because answer and riddle were never really joined).—And this answer to that riddle was never really joined.

What I now suggest as the true answers to these riddles are very simple, and, if true, they make an end at once of all the supposed evidence that Cynewulf was their author. Let us take first the Latin riddle in which "Lupus" is supposed to be the wulf of Cynewulf.

> Mirum videtur mihi: Lupus ab Agno teneter.
> Obcurrit Agnus et capit viscera Lupi.

The marvel of the Lamb that overcame the wolf and

tore its bowels out is of the Lamb of God who overcame the devil and destroyed his power.

> "Dum starem et mirarem, vidi gloriam magnam :
> Duo lupi stantes et tertium tribul [antes]
> IIII pedes habebant, cum septem oculis videbant."

The great glory then seen was of "the lamb that had been slain," the Divine appointment of the agony of one of the three Persons of the Trinity. The four feet were the four Gospels; and the seven eyes refer to the Book of Revelation, where the seven eyes of the Lamb are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. The last line but one may here be misinterpreted,* but the sense of the whole can be no other than this.

The first riddle appears also to be religious, and to represent simply the Christian Preacher. He is welcome to the people as one who brings gifts, the promises of the Gospel, and is received when he comes amongst them. He is on one island, of the spiritual life; upon the other island, of the fleshly life, is the wolf, the devil. The island is surrounded by the swamps of sin, and men in it are fierce and cruel. But they will receive the preacher of Christ when he comes among them. Their positions are unlike. Upon that island of the flesh there is suffering from the passionate desires that are of the wolf; when tears come with the sense of distress, there are worldly pleasures from embrace of the strong destroyer; but pain comes with them. There is yearning of the flesh towards the devil,

* The emphasis of the preceding line seems to forbid a less exalted reading, or the two wolves might be the Old and the New Testament troubling the devil, and having the four Gospels upon which their teaching stands. In either sense the wolf is used as a rending and destroying power; in one sense a destroyer of evil, and in the other a destroyer of good; rending also Christ Himself for the sins of the world.

grief from the expectation that he does not satisfy, not for want of the true bread of life. There is the preaching. Hearest thou it? Eádwaccer—the word means *custos bonorum*, watcher over our wealth—the child of us both, of Christian teacher and of the flesh. He carries the wolf to the wood: he brings the power of the devil over us to the rood tree, the wood of the Cross. Men who have never been joined in Christian brotherhood, and who are easily parted from each other, our music brings together.

So vanishes the name of Cynewulf out of the riddle, into which it has been too ingeniously read. For the last of the three riddles upon which the argument for Cynewulf's authorship has been founded, it is only argued that it points to a wandering singer. If that be granted, there is still nothing to show that Cynewulf was the scóp or gleeman. But that is not the answer. The wandering singer is the Word of God; of high nobility and known to men of high estate—saints and martyrs—resting with rich and poor among the people, bringing comfort to strangers and friends when it prospers or finds bright good in the cities of men; the wise love its companionship; it shall declare wisdom to many; its words were not spoken by any earthly voice. Though now men dwelling in the land are prompt to seek its traces, yet its way is sometimes hidden from every man. "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" The answer fits at every point without a trace of strain.

We have, then, no evidence upon which to ground a belief that Cynewulf wrote any of the First-English riddles.

There is one fact more to be noted, in the discovery at Leyden of the thirty-sixth riddle of the Exeter Book, written in Northumbrian dialect, in a MS. of the Latin enigmas of "Symposius" and Aldhelm. The Northumbrian version is older than that in the Exeter Book, but this fact

cannot again be used as another ground of belief in the Northumbrian origin of Cynewulf.

Of the poem of "Crist," which stands first in the Exeter Book, the sections were first printed as separate hymns. It was Franz Dietrich who first made it clear that they are parts of one sustained work, of which the opening has disappeared with lost first leaves of the manuscript. It is in three parts, which treat of the three comings of Christ: His Coming to Earth, based on verses 18—23 of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel; His Ascent into Heaven, based on the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of Paul to the Ephesians; and His Coming to Judgment, in which there is much use made of the tenth and twenty-ninth Homilies of Gregory the Great. Cynewulf's *Crist*.

Cynewulf's "Crist," of which the original opening is lost, begins for us with praise of Christ as the corner-stone that the builders rejected, and with looking to Christ from the prison of this world. The poet then dwells on the mystery of the pure birth of the Saviour, and passes to a hymning of praise of the Virgin, "the delight of women among all the hosts of Heaven." The theme of the Nativity is approached with an imagined dialogue between Joseph and Mary, and passes again into a strain of joyous hymning. In the one measure common to all First-English poetry, which I put into a modern form without change of his thoughts, Cynewulf thus sings his Call for Christ:—

Come now, thou Lord of Victory, Creator of Mankind,
  Make manifest Thy tenderness in mercy to us here!
Need is there for us all in Thee Thy Mother's kin to find,
  Though to Thy Father's mystery we cannot yet come near.

Christ, Saviour, by Thy coming bless this earth of ours with love;
  The golden gates, so long fast barred, do Thou, O Heavenly King,
Bid now unclose, that humbly Thou, descending from above,
  Seek us on earth, for we have need of blessing Thou canst bring.

With fangs of death the accursed Wolf hath scattered, Lord, the flock
That with Thy blood, in time of old, O Master, Thou hast bought:
He has us in fierce clutch, we are his prey, his mock,
He scorns our soul's desire; wherefore, to Thee is all our thought.

Thee, our Preserver, earnestly we pray that Thou devise
For sad exile a speedy help: let the dark Spirit fall
To depths of hell; but let Thy work, Creator, let Man rise
Justly to that high realm whence the Accurséd drew us all.

Through love of sin he drew us, that bereft of Heaven's light
We suffer endless miseries, betrayed for evermore,
Unless Thou come to save us from the slayer, Lord of Might!
Shelter of Man! O Living God! come soon, our need is sore!

Dialogues of Mary with the Jews and with Joseph, dramatic in conception, are thus blended with lyric passages. Christ born of Woman is the theme of this first part, which draws to a close amidst the adoration of the seraphim.

The next part celebrates the higher festival at which the angels, all arrayed in white, go forth to meet the Saviour of Man as He ascends to Heaven, bringing with Him the great company of the redeemed whom He has saved from death and hell. The theme of this part is Christ's victory, the opening of Heaven's gate to man, for whom Christ took on Himself the form of a servant that He might rise from height to height in bringing man to God. The first spring upward was when He took shape within the spotless Virgin; the second spring was when He was born; the third was when He died upon the cross; the fourth when He lay entombed; the fifth, when He descended into hell and bound Satan; the sixth, when He rose to Heaven with the saints, and all the angels of God came robed in white to welcome Him with songs of praise and triumph.

The third part of the poem passes to the Day of Judgment, which Christ has for all servants of God stripped of its terrors. Yet the bold will tremble—and the poet (here are the runes that show his name). The Day of

Judgment is then presented in epic form, and the last note is of the sure hope of those who teach and follow here the law of Christ while they uphold His praise. For such is Heavenly Glory, towards which, sooner or later, every man shall strive, by so guiding his spirit that it passes clean from sin into the power of God.

A didactic tone as of the preacher runs through all the poem, which, in its endeavour to fill the imagination of men with a lively sense of salvation by Christ, unites the epic, lyric, and dramatic forms. In the first part it is dramatic and lyric, in the rest epic and lyric, and throughout there are passages of simple, earnest preaching to the people.*

We have not yet had Cædmon's Paraphrase ascribed to Cynewulf, but he has been credited with the authorship of "Beowulf" by Dr. Gr. Sarrazin of the University of Kiel.† Dr. Sarrazin's paper is valuable for its detailed confirmation of agreement in poetical form and phrase between the works signed by Cynewulf and the old heroic poetry to whose time, upon their first discovery, they were assigned by Jacob Grimm. Dr. Sarrazin has collected thirty-three phrases common to "Beowulf" and to Cynewulf's "Elene;" most of them are taken from the first seven hundred lines of "Beowulf" and from the first two hundred lines of the second song. His next list of parallels includes as work of Cynewulf the Riddles, "Guthlac" and "The Phœnix;" which we set aside, taking

Did Cynewulf write *Beowulf?*

* This character of Cynewulf's "Crist" is well pointed out by Adolf Ebert in the third volume (Leipzig, 1887) of his "Allgemeine Geschichte der Literatur des Mittelalters im Abendlande." This volume includes an excellent brief sketch of the substance and character of our First-English poetry, together with a full study of the Latin literature of Western Europe to the end of the tenth century.

† "Anglia," vol. ix. (for 1886), pp. 515-550: "Beowulf und Kynewulf."

only the "Crist" and the "Juliana." Here there are sixteen phrases common to "Beowulf" and these two poems. "Andreas" also is compared, on the assumption that it was by Cynewulf, and here the number of the cited parallels is seventy-one. The poem of "Andreas" came, if not from the author of "Elene," from the same period of literature, and used the same poetical phrases at a time when First-English poetry, like Scandinavian, had a well-recognised poetic diction. Such phrases as "folcum to frófre," "æfre ic ne hýrde," "wordhord onleác," "billum ond byrnum," and many more in the list, belonged to the common language of the poets, and had lost all trace of individuality. Dr. Sarrazin's inference from the resemblances to which he calls distinct attention is, that either Cynewulf imitated the Interpolator B of "Beowulf," or the Interpolator B imitated Cynewulf; or Cynewulf and Interpolator B were the same person; and he argues very ably for the third opinion. He holds that what is told in "Beowulf" of an Ingeld King of the Heaðobards belongs to an Ingeld King of the Danes who must have lived in the year 700, and that the text of "Beowulf" must therefore be of the latter half of the eighth century, when Cynewulf lived. Accepting the fullest previous development of Cynewulf as author of all the poems that have been assigned to him by all the theorists, Dr. Sarrazin adds "Beowulf" to the list, and sets it in its place among the rest.

When Cynewulf was a wandering singer and wrote riddles he went to Denmark and heard, says Dr. Sarrazin, the tale of Böðvar Biarki. This hero, after his father's death, was trained in the court of King Hring of Updal, and after visiting a brother in Gautland went to the court of the King Hrolf Krake at Lethra in Denmark, and entered the service of Hrolf Krake after feasting in his hall. After a time he learnt that the place had been afflicted in two

autumns by the visits of a great beast with wings on its back. "It is a Troll," said Hök, who was a coward. When Yule-tide came the king forbade his men to go out against the beast, because he would not lose one of them. But Böðvar slipped out, and compelled Hök to go with him. Hök was so great a coward that he had to be carried part of the way. Then they saw the beast coming towards them. Hök shrieked; Böðvar threw him down in the moss and bade him be quiet. Böðvar crouched and watched. As the beast came nearer he tried to draw his sword, but it had stuck in his belt. As he jerked it out, the sword flew from the scabbard and struck the beast to the heart, so that he died. Böðvar made Hök drink some of the beast's blood, which put courage into him. Then they set the dead beast on its legs, so that it seemed to be alive; and then they slipped quietly home. Next morning the sight of the beast alarmed the country people. The king and his followers went out against it. Böðvar told Hök to go and kill it. Hök knocked it down, acquired great fame for courage, and became thenceforth a brave companion of Böðvar. In this story Dr. Sarrazin * is ingenious enough to find not only a solar myth, but also the germ of "Beowulf." Böðvar becomes old Danish, Bauðver, translated into First-English Beawar, Beowar, Beowa. The translator mistook the second syllable var for vargr, wolf, and therefore wrote Beowulf.

Cynewulf, according to this theory, in his years of wandering found this tale in Denmark and turned it into a First-English poem of Beowa, at the time when he had written only the riddles. Then he entered into holy orders, and wrote "Guthlac A"; then he wrote "Crist"; then "The Phœnix"; then "Juliana"; then "Guthlac B"; then he recast "Beowulf," being Interpolator B to his own early

* "Anglia," vol. ix. pp. 195–20

poem; probably at the same time he wrote the poems upon Scandinavian themes which are now lost; then he wrote "Elene." There is a suggested opportunity of reconcilement between those who have dwelt upon the unity of the poem of "Beowulf" and those who have seen mixture of styles in it and ascribed it to several persons. It had one author, Cynewulf; but it was written by him in his youth and interpolated by him in his later years. So let us all agree.

The myth of our own day concerning Cynewulf is, that a poem upon Ruins, afterwards to be described, was not only written by him but describes the ruin of the house of his father at Ruthwell. There he was born in the year 700, the son of a great man who lived in a great castle by the sea. Much of that frequent use of images drawn from the sea which is a character of our old poetry is to be traced, therefore, to the coast of Dumfries near the Firth of Solway. Cynewulf grew to be a poet, as a child at Ruthwell. He was taught in the school of the neighbouring monastery, and returned to his father's castle, as a young man eager to enjoy the pleasures of the world. He became himself a lord. He darted the spear and rode the war-horse, he distributed gold rings from the gift stool, and his praise was sung to the harp in the mead hall. Ceolwulf had to subdue in Northumbria both foreign and domestic foes. Cynewulf served him as a soldier, and also sang in his hall the victories he helped to win. In time of peace Cynewulf, chief himself, was scóp at the court of Ceolwulf. He travelled also as scóp to the courts of the princes, receiving from them gems and twisted gold. In those days he wrote the riddles, the poem of "The Wanderer," and the gnomic verses. But when Cynewulf was thirty-seven years old—counting his years with the years of the century — Æðelbald wasted Northumbria; Ceolwulf withdrew into the monastery at Lindisfarne; and

The myth of Cynewulf.

the rule passed to Eadbert. Cynewulf, saddened by the fall of friends, then gave up the active for the contemplative life; he became a monk, and through the good offices of the retired king Ceolwulf, who desired his companionship, about the year 740, at the age of forty, Cynewulf was made Abbot of Lindisfarne. But in the year 750 Cynewulf fell under the suspicion of King Eadbert, who thought that he had been privy to the murder of Offa; he was therefore seized and carried to a prison at Bebbamburh. Cynewulf was in prison for some time, and also for some time in banishment, before he was recalled to his bishopric. As prisoner and exile he wrote poems which for their character may be referred to such a period; and perhaps he wrote also at this time some lives of saints to encourage himself by contemplation of the sufferings and privations of holy men. After his recall Cynewulf ruled over the community of Lindisfarne until the year 780, when he resigned his office and retired for closing years of contemplation to his birthplace, where there were the ruins of his father's castle. A great man had erected a cross at Ruthwell, and in honour of the poet born there he had caused to be engraved on it some lines from the "Vision of the Holy Cross" (a poem, of course, written, like most others, by Cynewulf). The old man built himself a hut beside the cross on which those lines had been engraved; and he dug beside it his next resting-place, the grave in which he was laid in the year 783.*

What we do really know of Cynewulf is that his name was first discovered about half a century ago, woven into the text of three poems, a large song of the Saviour, and two tales of saints. By their form and style these three poems carry us back

What we know of Cynewulf.

* Dr. Richard Wülcker—one of the few opponents of this way of guessing out a poet—in "Anglia," vol. i., pp. 485–490, pieces out the myth with full detail and citation of the critical authority for every part of it.

towards the time when "Beowulf" was familiar in the halls of chiefs; they contain some traces of northern English; and we may reasonably think that their author lived in the eighth century. In one of his poems—"Elene"—he speaks of himself as old; as having known trouble; as having travelled, and as having received gifts in the mead hall. His work shows that he was a scóp. There is no evidence that he was priest or monk. There ends our knowledge of the personality of Cynewulf, and even that includes a trace of supposition.

The simplest inference from these facts is that the Paraphrase of Cædmon really represents the form into which the work of the scóp passed when Christianity was first established in this land. The demand for tales from the old heathen days was less, and was discouraged by the clergy. Men must have tales, and when the story of their faith had been brought home to their hearts, saints were the heroes of whom the traditions yielded to the scóp an ever-running stream of tales of miracle and marvel. Tales of the holy men must needs be current also on their holy days. It was not necessary that the scóp should become a priest before he shaped for open recitation the new kind of tale that had been brought into demand. He belonged to a class of which the foremost members were the poets of the land, the men who felt most of the spirit of their time, whose shaping would be, as it must always be, of what was worthiest in all the life about them. Schools had multiplied, churchmen were the teachers, and their schools were for all who sought instruction. The gleeman might be no more than a mime, but the scóp lived chiefly by the tillage of a mind more fertile than his neighbour's.

It is wholly unnecessary to suppose that Cynewulf was monk or priest, because when he was old and wished to shape a poem on the finding of the Cross, he sought among books for his material. That the material for

"Elene" was found in a Greek book corroborates the suggestion that Cynewulf wrote his poems before the decline of letters that caused Greek, in King Alfred's time, to be known only to a few. That he did not write in broad rustic Northumbrian, if he happened to have been born in Northumbria—but who knows?—would only mean that in a time of advanced culture he used what had become the standard English of cultivated speakers and writers, indicating only now and then by chance the dialectic forms familiar to his ear.

CHAPTER X.

TO THE END OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

SOME poems to which reference has been made from time to time, and which have been briefly described among the contents of the Exeter and Vercelli Books, should now have closer attention. These are "The Vision of the Cross;" a fragment of a poem on "The Descent into Hell;" "Guthlac;" "Ruins;" "The Wanderer;" "The Phœnix;" also "The Panther," and "The Whale," as parts of a Physiologus; all of which have been by different writers ascribed to Cynewulf, as well as "The Seafarer," "The Fortunes of Men," and "The Gifts of Men." A few pieces that will be referred to in a later chapter may be of earlier date than the ninth century; but of none of the pieces here spoken of is the author known. They serve only to illustrate early forms of English life and literature.

The Vision of the Cross.

Of the date of the poem from which a few lines are inscribed on the Ruthwell Cross there would be some indication if the age of the cross itself could be determined. Professor George Stephens places it in the seventh century, and reads a runic line on the restored head of the cross: "Cædmon me fawed, Cædmon made me," which would not only corroborate the date in the seventh century, but would give some reason for believing that "The Vision of the Cross" is a poem of Cædmon's. Stephens considers that Cædmon was the only

poet in the seventh century who could have written "The Vision of the Cross," and that it shows signs of having been translated into the West Saxon out of Northumbrian. The Rev. Dr. Haigh says that the lines inscribed on the cross in Northumbrian English "are evidently earlier even than those which occur in the contemporary version of Bæda's verses in a MS. at St. Gallen, and the copy of Cædmon's first song at the end of the MS. of the 'Historia Ecclesiastica,' which was completed two years after its author's death." Dietrich argued for the authorship of Cynewulf, and even considered that "The Vision of the Cross" suggested to him the writing of "Elene;" and Professor Bernhard Ten Brink is of the same opinion. But it is mere opinion based upon arguments which are themselves only expressions of opinion. The poem represents the Cross in a vision telling its own tale, thus:—

THE VISION OF THE CROSS.

What! * I will tell you the choicest of Dreams
That I dreamt at midnight when all talkers were still
In their rest.
For I saw, as it seemed, in the air a strange Tree
Moving circled with light, the most shining of stems;
All that sign was wrought over with gold, and four gems
Were below by the ground, five at spread of its arms;
On it gazed all the angels of God in their glory for aye.
Truly that was no gallows of shame whereon eyes of the angels were stayed,
And the eyes of the holy on Earth, and of all the Creator has made.
And the Tree was a wonder. I spotted with sins,
Wounded sorely with vices, the glorious Tree,
As it blissfully shone, I saw worthily robed
And with gold all adorned, nobly covered with gems,
The strange tree of the wold. Yet I saw through the gold

* This opening "Hwæt!" with a strong twang of the harp strings, silenced clamour of surrounding voices when the tale was to begin. "Beowulf" begins in the same way.

The old strife of that sad one, when first it began
To drop blood from its right side. I troubled with cares
Was in fear at the vision of beauty. I saw the swift beam
In its dress and its colour to change; and there came a wet steam
That was soiled with the running of blood; and there came the
rich treasure again.
Yet I sorrowful lay a long while looking there
On the Saviour's Tree till I heard the Tree speak,
And to me in these words spoke the holiest wood:
"That was a time long ago, and still I remember,
When I was cut from my stem at the edge of a forest,
There to be wrought for a spectacle; taken by strong foes,
Slaves they commanded to lift me, and forth on their shoulders
Carry me till they had set me up on a high Mount,
Foemen were many to fix me. Then I beheld that
Mankind's great Lord hasted in might to ascend me.
Then dared I not oppose the word of God,
And break or burst asunder, though I saw
The bosom of the earth shake and be cleft:
I could have struck the foes down, yet stood firm.
Then a young warrior prepared himself—
That was Almighty God, strong, fixed of mood—
Ascended the high gallows in the sight
Of many eyes, when he would save mankind.
I trembled in the mighty clasp, yet dared not bend
To earth, or fall; for I was to stand firm.
I was raised up as cross, lifted the King
High Lord of Heaven, and I dared not stoop.
They pierced Him with dark nails; you see on me
The wounds laid open by the envious blows:
I dared hurt none of them. They scorned us both.
I was all stained with blood from the Man's side
When He had yielded up the ghost.
Many a cruel fate have I endured
Upon the Mount. I saw the God of Men
Strong there to serve. The darkness had concealed
In clouds the body of the mighty Lord;
Sunshine was lost in shadow of wan clouds;
All things created wept, mourned their King's fall.
Christ was upon the Cross, but there came men
In haste, from far, to the Lord. All this I saw.
Sore troubled, yet I bowed to the men's hands

Humbly, with all my strength. Then there they took
The Almighty God, from the hard place of pain
They raised Him; me the heroes left to stand
Blood stained, with arrows wounded. Him they laid,
With yielding limbs, stood at the body's head,
Looked on the Heaven's Lord, and there awhile
He rested, weary after His great strife.
The men began, before the murderers' eyes,
To make all ready for His burial,
And carved a grave for Him in shining stone,
And laid therein the Lord of Victory.
And in the evening the sorrowers
Sang their lament, when they must turn away
In grief from the high King. He rested then
Where no men were about Him. Yet for some time
We crosses stayed there, weeping where we stood,
Then stirred a storm of men of war—the corpse,
Dear house of life, was cold—the men began
To fell us all to earth, a dreadful fate.
They buried us in a deep pit, but there
Servants of God learnt where I was, and me
They raised from earth, and they adorned me then
With silver and with gold. Now mayst thou hear,
Beloved man, what baleful deeds, sore griefs,
Were mine to know. Now the good time is come
That far and wide men over all the earth,
And all the great creation, honour me,
And pray towards this Sign. The Son of God
On me suffered awhile, therefore I now
Am lifted high in glory, and can heal
Each one of those who pay me reverence.
Once I was known as hardest punishment,
Most loathsome to all men, ere I made plain
The Way of Life to those who hear the Word.
What! Me the Lord of Glory has exalted,
Heaven's guardian, above all trees of the wold,
As He, Almighty God, Mary herself,
His mother, made most blessed among women.
Now bid I thee, beloved man, to tell
This Vision among men, disclose in words
That it is of the glory-beam, whereon
The Almighty suffered for man's many sins

And Adam's old offence. He suffered death
Thereon, yet with His power the Lord
Arose again to be the help of man.
He ascended then to Heaven, to come again
To this mid earth, the Lord Himself, to seek
Mankind at Doomsday; the Almighty God,
His angels with Him, He will come to judge,
He who has power of judgment, every one
As he before here in this passing life
Deserved. None may be fearless at the word
Then spoken by the Lord. Then He will ask
Before the multitude, 'Where is the man
Who in the Lord's name dares taste bitter death
As He did once upon the Tree?' But they
Fear then, and think it little they can say
To Christ. Yet none need fear who in his breast
Beareth the best of Signs, but through the Cross
Each soul through ways of Earth shall seek out Heaven,
Of those who think their home is with the Lord.'

Then with glad mind and all my power I prayed
To the tree there, where I was all alone,
No men about me. For my mind's desire
Was eager for departure. I have known
In all my hours many an hour of longing;
Now my life's comfort is that I may seek
The Tree of Victory, I only, oftenest
Of all men, pay right reverence to it.
The will to it is great within my heart,
And for defence I look but to the Cross.
I have not many precious friends on earth,
From the world's joys they have gone hence to seek
The King of Glory, they live now in Heaven,
With the High Father; I now day by day
Expect the time when the Lord's Cross, that here
On earth I once beheld, shall take me forth
From this weak life and bring me where is joy
And the great bliss of Heaven, where at the feast
The people of the Lord are seated, where
The joy is everlasting, and shall seat
Me also where I may abide thenceforth
In glory, share the pleasures of the just.

The Lord be friend to me, who suffered once
On earth upon the Cross for sins of men:
He has redeemed us, given life to us,
A home in Heaven. Comfort was renewed
With health and bliss to those who burnt before
The Son made firm and glorious the path
Of victory, when with a multitude,
A troop of souls, he came into God's Kingdom,
Almighty ruler; joy to angels, joy
To all the holy ones who dwelt before
In glory, when their Lord came in,
The Lord Almighty, to His mercy-seat.

The Ruthwell Cross has two broad faces and two narrower sides. The broader faces are carved with figures in compartments representing Scripture scenes, the chief scene on one side being Mary Magdalene washing the feet of Christ, and on the other Christ glorified, with life in the flesh (represented by swine) subject to Him. Each of the scenes is surrounded by a Latin inscription that interprets it. The narrower sides have flat raised edges, and it is down these edges that the runic letters are cut, as space allows—two, three, or four in a line—without any indication of beginning, end, or division of words—thus, a few upper letters being lost:—

RO
DI
HW
EÐ
RÆ
ÞE [ ]
RF
USÆ
FEAR
RAN
CWO
MU [ ] Æ
ÞÞIL
ÆTIL &c.

This Kemble read, supplying the upper letters [KRIST WÆS ON] RODI. HWEÐRÆ ÞER FUSÆ FEARRAN CWOMO ÆÞÞILÆ; and that corresponds to the lines in "The Vision of the Cross":—

> Crist wæs on rode;
> Hwæðere þær fuse feoran cwomon
> To þam æþelinge—

and so throughout, each of the runic inscriptions being a little extract from the speech of the Cross in the Vision. One is the part above translated:—

> "Christ was upon the cross, but there came men
> In haste, from far, to the Lord. All this I saw."

Another is:—

> . . . . with arrows wounded. Him they laid,
> With yielding limbs, stood at the . . . .

Another is at the passage where Christ

> . . . . prepared Himself,
> Ascended the high gallows in the sight
> Of many eyes.

The fourth is at

> . . . . the King,
> High Lord of Heaven, I dared not to stoop.
> They scorned us both,
> I was all stained with blood . . . .

Every one of the passages is, in an old Northumbrian form,* a piece of the old "Vision of the Cross," which

* With *æe* for *e* in oblique case; *a* for West Saxon *o*, as "walde" for "wolde," "I would;" infinitive present in *a* or *æe* in place of *an*. There is also "Hifunes" for "Heofones," a difference which marks antiquity; and the dual form "ungket"—us two—which became First-English unc. Cædmon twice uses "incit"—ye two—for the First-English "inc;" and Jacob Grimm had prophesied before the reading of these runes that "uncit" would some day be found to pair with

comes to us transposed into West Saxon among the poems of the Vercelli Book. Whether we are to take as direct evidence of Cædmon's authorship of this poem the reading in the restored top of the Cross, "Cadmon me fawed," is hard to say. Its author was a poet, and of the north; the short passages from it that were carved in Northumbrian English on the Ruthwell Cross are most likely to be from the work in its original form. But, with few examples dated or undated upon which to found distinction, it is impossible to say certainly that a piece of Northumbrian is of the seventh or of the eighth century. "Cadmon made me" may more probably refer to a stonecutter who carved the cross with all its sculptured figures and inscriptions than to a poet from whom lines on it are quoted. Let us be content, therefore, to say we do not know who wrote the "Vision of the Cross." The student who seeks knowledge must be content in many things to reserve judgment, and be bold to answer many questions with an honest "I don't know."

Guthlac.

Of the metrical legend of Guthlac, already described, it is to be further noted that this has been treated by Rieger* as formed out of two independent poems, the first of them, A, extending to line 790, and telling, not from books, but from oral tradition, the story of the saint's triumphs over temptation, and of his death, with a few following reflections. There is, however, reference at lines 499, 500, to "the books that made wisdom known through Guthlac's 'wundra geweorc.'" The second poem, B, begins at line 791, and is a poem on the death of Guthlac, founded on the life of him in Latin—and especially the fifth chapter of the life—by Felix of Croyland. Rieger considered both poems to be by Cynewulf. Dietrich

it; and it is found where it might be best looked for, if it be true of this piece that "Cadmon me fawed."

* In Zacher's "Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie," i. 325 (1868).

believed them to be one poem by Cynewulf. Franz Charitius* reasoned at length from verse and phrase that Guthlac A and Guthlac B were by two different authors; that A was born while Guthlac lived, but heard most about him after he was dead, and that Guthlac A was written between the years 730 and 740. But Guthlac B, which follows the Vita Guðlaci by Felix of Croyland, was written afterwards, within the same century, by Cynewulf. Paul Lefèvre,† dividing Guthlac into three parts, the first ending at line 500, the second at line 900, and comparing the text of each separately with the text of works by Cynewulf, ascribed them all to Cynewulf, and gave a long interval (in which he supposed "Juliana" to have been written) between the second and third; the narrative of the third being more steadily consecutive, while in the first and second parts there are repetitions. Richard Wülcker believes that Cynewulf wrote only Guthlac B, and that it was his first attempt at epic narrative. It seems to me that the poem is one poem from one hand, but that the design was to celebrate the saint by a poem written in sections convenient for recitation to the people. Patience could not be relied upon for a full hearing of more than 1,350 long lines, but the poem was conveniently planned. There seems really to have been a pause designed at line 500, and the Saint's adventures in the first five hundred lines could have been given in two or three separate recitations, with a little modification by the gleeman of the line with which, considering his audience, he thought best to begin. The old way of publication and diffusion certainly affected the old way of constructing poems that were too long to be often recited at one sitting, or that, like

* "Anglia," ii. 265—308, "Ueber die angelsächsische Gedichte vom heiligen Guthlac."

† "Anglia," vi. 181—240, "Das altenglische Gedicht vom heiligen Guthlac."

Guthlac, contained wonderful incidents that could be briefly told.

Of the poems on the Panther and the Whale, and the small fragment on a Bird—representing creatures of Earth, Water, and Air—which are in the Exeter Book, it may be added to what has already been said that the bird, which was not named in the fragment upon it, was guessed by Grein to be the partridge, and this has been established by Adolph Ebert,* who has discussed these pieces of the once popular religious zoology, which gave legendary characters to animals, and fitted them as allegories to some points of Christian teaching. Ebert refers to two manuscripts of the ninth century at Bongars,† which the discoverer, Cahier, calls B and C, that agree so well with each other and with the pieces in the Exeter Book as to suggest a common source in some earlier and unknown Physiologus. B, which is fuller than C, after twenty-two other animals, proceeds to give, in the same order as in the Exeter Book and with like forms of parable, the Panther, the Whale, and the Partridge. C has the Panther followed immediately by the Whale, but being a shorter collection, it omits the Partridge altogether. In the oldest Greek "Physiologus" also, it is observed that the Panther, Whale, and Partridge follow in succession. The legend of the partridge is that she does not sit on her own eggs,‡ but steals and hatches the eggs of another partridge; but her reward is that the young birds leave her when they hear the voice of their own parent. The voice is the voice of Christ, the young are the children of the Creator. The partridges that sit on eggs which are not theirs are the black sins of hell. The few

* "Anglia," vi. 241—247 (1883), "Der angelsächsische Physiologus."

† Published by Cahier in "Mélanges d'Archéologie," iii. 248.

‡ So in Jeremiah, xvii. 2, "As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not. . . ."

lines left in the Exeter Book about the bird are such as would fit exactly to this parable.

Since the rhyming poem can hardly be regarded as work of the eighth century, though even that has been ascribed to Cynewulf, we will not speak of it here.

The thoughtful note of lament over the instability of earthly fortune is among the poems of the Exeter Book which may be referred to the eighth century.

The Wanderer.

The lonely exile who has fled across the waters often finds the grace of God, says the Wanderer, as he thinks of the old stir of battle and the fall of friends. There are none to whom he can now speak of the grief within; and well he knows that it becomes brave men to keep their troubles to themselves. Lament cannot bring help, and therefore honourable men often fast lock their sad thoughts in their hearts; and so the Wanderer, forced from his home, the friends of his youth long buried under earth, looks across the waters for some mead hall in which he might find cheer by the gift stool. He who has tried it knows how hard it is for the man who has no protector, wandering with sorrow for companion. He thinks of the hall, and the men, and the taking of gifts from the friend who was good to him in youth. It is gone. He sleeps in sorrow, and in dreams he kisses his lost lord, embraces him, lays hand and head upon his knee, as he had done in the old days of the gift stool. Then he awakes friendless and looks out on the grey sea, sees the birds dip in the waves, snow and hail fall, and the wound of his heart smarts the more keenly. Then in his mind he visits again his kindred, speaks to them joyously, looks eagerly into their faces; but the companions vanish as they came, familiar voices are unheard, grief is renewed to the Wanderer, who sends his sorrowing thought far back over the deep. How can there be cheer for him, when he thinks of all that is lost? So sinks and falls this world from hour to hour. A

wise man must be patient, neither rash nor timid; he should wait to search the depths of the heart's thought. He sees wind-beaten ruined walls of happy homes. The walls fall, and they who dwelt within them fall, a joyless company. Some fall in battle, one was snatched across the seaflood, one has the wolf slain, one has been sadly hidden in the grave. The Creator has laid waste the home, and giant walls stand empty, the gay throng is there no more. He who is wise and thinks of such things breaks out into such words as these: "Where now is the horse? where is the man? where is the spender of treasure? where is the feast? where the joy of the hall? Ah, ye bright cups! Ah, warriors in mail! Ah, glory of the ruler! How is all hid under the helm of night, as if it had not been! There is left only the high wall, gay snake, and lizards. The storm of spears has swept away the nobles, and the storm beats upon the shelter of the stones, the cold storm binds the falling earth, the roar of winter when night falls with its black shadows and the north sends hail. All the realm of this earth is full of cares; fate rules; wealth, friends, and kindred pass away; all the fixed earth grows empty." So spoke the wise man as he sat apart with his own thoughts. It is well to be true. A man should never make known too rashly the distress he has at heart, unless he have strength thereby to amend it. Happy is he who seeks for grace and comfort from the Father in Heaven, with whom only all foundations can be firm.

The beautiful poem of which this is the substance * has been, of course, taken literally, and read into the life of Cynewulf. But it is not in the least necessary to believe that it represents the personal experience of the scóp, whoever he may have been, by whom it was framed. A poet draws, from common knowledge of the world in which he

* It has been gracefully translated into verse by Miss E. H. Hickey, in the *Academy* for May 14, 1881.

lives, a vivid picture of the insecurity of human life and joy, that he may close by pointing to the life with God in which alone we have our footing sure. But the poet is nameless. His thought lives, while he himself, like the storm-beaten ruin that he paints, is dust that has been long since scattered on the winds.

Another poem of the same class has for its theme Ruins, and is itself a ruin from which many fragments have fallen away. It describes the large ruin of a stone-built town, rather than a tower, dwelling emphatically upon its hot springs and the ruin of baths that were walled in. Bath was known of old as Acamannaceaster, Akmanchester, the city of the sick, in old British form the camp at the place Aquæ, and Hâte baðu, hot baths; afterwards Baðon, Bath. It was in repute for its hot baths in the time of the Romans, who had a station there —Aquæ Sulis—and a College of Armourers for the supply of weapons to the legions, and a temple to Sul, the local deity, as Sul-Minerva. The Roman baths were discovered in 1755, sixteen feet below the surface. They had been magnificent with columns and tesselated pavements. The central bath was ninety feet by sixty. Altars, Samian ware, a colossal female head, a bronze head of Apollo, and other glories of the past have been found in modern days among the ruins of the Roman baths. It was one of the cities attacked and taken by Ceawlin, King of Wessex, in the year 577, during a long struggle with the British in that district. For the next hundred years there is no known mention of the place, and it may not have been re-settled when Osric King of the Hwiccas founded a monastery there in the year 676. Perhaps attention had been specially drawn to it, and the re-establishment of the baths have been in view after Offa had acquired, in the year 781, the patronage of the monastery. Under Offa began the revival of Bath towards the end of the eighth century, and it may have been then that this description of the ruin was diffused in song.

Ruins.

CHAPTER XI.

DICUIL—JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA.

DICUIL was an Irish monk, who travelled in his youth, then settled in an Irish monastery in France at the school of a countryman named Suibne, and received there an account of a visit to the Holy Land made before the year 767 by a monk named Fidelis. This account, with geographical details picked up from other informants, he included in a description of the earth written A. D. 825. At that time Dicuil must have been seventy years old. His book, entitled "De Mensurâ Orbis Terræ,"* was founded upon a work in repute among geographers of his own day, which contained the measures of the Roman Empire as they were said to have been taken under the Emperor Theodosius. Not the least interesting point in it is an example it gives of the devotion of that native church which laboured quietly while Rome laboured ambitiously, and of which the fame has been drowned under trumpetings of honour due to Gregory and Austin. Dicuil says that he had spoken with priests who had visited the remote island of Thule, far away in the north. Between it and Britain are a cluster of islets (the Faroes) thronged with sheep and sea-birds, inhabited for upwards of a hundred years by Irish hermits who had been driven away by the Northern rovers.

Dicuil.

* Two MSS. are in the Imperial Library at Paris. The book was edited for the press in Paris by C. A. Walckenaer in 1807, and by A. Letronne in 1814.

Dicuil's description of the summer day and winter night in Thule shows that he means Iceland, and in Iceland, says a recent traveller, we find the traces of these priests in places bearing such names as Patreksfjord and Erlendr-ey.*

In the year 813, Louis le Débonnaire, or the Pious, Charlemagne's only surviving son, was ordered by his father to put the imperial crown on his own head in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. In 819 he married Judith, the daughter of the Bavarian Count Guelph, whose descendants still reign in Britain and Brunswick. He had three sons by his first wife, and now Judith gave him a fourth and favourite son, Charles (the Bald). Into what troubles his sons brought the weak old king; how he died in 840, and, after war among themselves, his sons, in 843, divided the empire of Charlemagne into three parts —an Italy of mixed nationalities; a sufficiently uniform Germany, and a French nation, which fell to the part of Charles the Bald, who in 875 seized part of the Italian portion, and in 876 received the imperial crown from Pope John VIII., two years before his death—we may call summarily to mind as we pass next to an English writer famous at the court of Charles the Bald. Through the earnest practical digestion of accepted knowledge by which the literature of the Anglo-Saxons is throughout very distinctly characterised, and in strong contrast to the severe literalness of Alcuin, there breaks even from the midst of the Church one gleam at least of the vivacity and daring of that more inventive Celtic wit which has since helped our sober Teutonic nature to put the flash of genius and the play of fancy into utterance of its most earnest thought.

John Scotus Erigena.

John Scotus Erigena may not have been ordained one of the clergy. He describes himself only as "the last of

* "Iceland: Its Scenes and Sagas." By Sabine Baring-Gould, M.A. (London, 1863).

the students of wisdom." Two contemporaries, Hincmar and Pope Nicolas I., in writing of him to Charles the Bald, described him as "Joannes, genere Scotus,"* "quindam vir," or "Scotus ille." Anastasius called him Scottigena. Pardulus, bishop of Laudun, wrote of him about 853 as "that Scot named John, who is in the palace of the King." His name and nature answer for his Celtic origin. He might have been Scot of Erin; but if so, it is argued, why was he never called before the sixteenth century Erinigena? He was called, as Thomas Gale pointed out,† Erigena or Eriugena. In the oldest codex,‡ that used by Archbishop Ussher, he is called Eriugena. On this ground a Scotch writer § claims him as an Ayrshire man, born in the town of Ayr. But Gale himself brought him from Wales, or a part of Herefordshire, then Welsh, called Ergede,‖ or by the Welsh Erynug or Ereinuc, where there was a place called Eriaven. Of his birth and parentage, and of the date of his birth, nothing is really known. It is a reasonable inference that he was trained in one of the monasteries of this country, which, before the onslaughts of the Danes, were the chief seats of European learning. Charlemagne had grafted on the fruitless stock of his own empire a vigorous shoot of English scholarship in Alcuin, who spread among the Franks his schools, wherein pupils were to be carried part of the way, or all the way, through the trivium and quadrivium. Scholarship was in high demand in France when in this country it was being overwhelmed by the invaders. Erigena went therefore to France, where he was

* Natalis Alexander in "Hist. Eccl." sec. IX. et X. Dissert. XIV. § 4.

† In his "Testimonies of the Ancients upon J. Sc. E."

‡ In the library of Trin. Coll. Cam.

§ George Mackenzie in "Lives and Characters of Scots Writers" (Edinburgh, 1708), vol. i. p. 49.

‖ Domesday Book called it Archenefeldt, *i.e.* Ergene.

received with high favour by Charles the Bald. That king accounted him a miracle of wit and knowledge, and, though quick-tempered, made the free-spoken Scot his table-companion and friend, without even in one instance resenting his free speech. Said the king to the logician, sitting opposite to him, "What parts a Scot from a sot?" "Only the table," said Erigena. A dish, containing two great fishes and a little one, was offered to the Scot when he (a little man) sat at the king's table between two fat priests. The king bade him divide the dish with his two neighbours. He did so, taking to himself the two big fishes, and leaving to his two neighbours the little one. "That is unfair," said the king. "Quite fair," said Erigena. "There," pointing to the two whales and himself, "are two big ones and a little one; and there," pointing to his two fat neighbours and the sprat, "are two big ones and a little one."* Erigena was distinguished among Frankish clergy by his knowledge of Greek. He had an imagination to be touched by Plato's spiritual fancy, and he had read in their own tongue many of the Greek fathers. At the desire, therefore, of Charles, he translated for him into Latin the works ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, which had been sent in 827 by the Greek emperor, Michael Balbus, as a present to Louis le Débonnaire. Louis had commissioned Abbot Hilduin, of the abbey of St. Dionysius, or Denys, to translate them into Latin; but no more than that is heard of Hilduin's version.†

Dionysius the Areopagite was supposed to have been converted by St. Paul, and to have been the first bishop of

* The stories are in Roger de Hoveden and in Gale.

† Hilduin in Areopagiticis, ed. Cologne, 1563, p. 66. I quote through Staudenmaier, whose work—"Johannes Scotus Erigena und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit, von Dr. Franz Anton Staudenmaier, Prof. der Theologie an der Katholischen Fakultät zu Giessen" (Frankfort, 1834)—was the first good German study of Erigena.

the Christians in Athens. It was only after the fifth century that mystical writings in the Greek language appeared under his name, on the "Hierarchies of Heaven;" the "Hierarchies, or Successive Steps of the Mysteries of the Church;" the "Names of God applied to the Study of the Divine Nature;" on "Mystical Theology;" with ten letters, more or less mystical. One letter was said to have been written to St. John at Patmos. Some of them discuss the humanity and person of Christ, some suggest charitable views of the relation of the Church to the heathen and the heretic. These writings were first submitted to a conference at Constantinople, in the year 532, to support the doctrines of a particular sect then impugned. Disowned then as unheard of, they made their way slowly, till Gregory the Great at the end of the century made free use of the book on the Heavenly Hierarchy. In the middle of the seventh century Maximus Confessor appeared as a Greek scholiast upon the Areopagitica; and a century later John of Damascus accepted them as dogmatic authorities. The Areopagite had come to pass for a Greek father when Erigena, half suspected of heresy for his Platonic tendencies and his free speech, translated into Latin for Charles the Bald, with a rigid literalness, first Dionysius, and afterwards, at the king's request, his scholiast Maximus. This brought their mysticism—with especial favour to the sections upon Angels and the Sacraments, and the Nature of God—home to the theologians of Western Europe.

Erigena's own great work is on the "Division of Nature," in five books, which blended Platonism with doctrines of the Church. His next work, on "Predestination," opposed Augustine's doctrine of the predestination of some to damnation, some to bliss; and it approached so closely to the doctrines of Pelagius that the Synod of Valentia in 855 formally declared the double predestination to be a doctrine of the Church. That synod

The "Division of Nature."

pronounced Erigena's book "rather a comment of the devil than an argument of the faith;" and, as Erigena had not paid any attention to the Pope's censure of a translation of Dionysius without his consent or privity, the influence of Rome was, it is said by some writers, now used successfully to procure the expulsion of "that Scot" from Paris. The death of his patron, Charles the Bald, caused Erigena then to return to England, where William of Malmesbury tells how he is reported to have died :—

"A man," says the English chronicler, "of clear understanding and amazing eloquence. He had long since, from the continued tumult of war around him, retired into France to Charles the Bald, at whose request he translated the "Hierarchia" of Dionysius the Areopagite, word for word, out of the Greek into Latin. He composed a book also, which he entitled "περὶ φύσεων μερισμοῦ," or "De Divisione Naturæ," extremely useful in solving the perplexity of certain indispensable inquiries, if he be pardoned for some things in which he deviated from the opinions of the Latins, through too close attention to the Greeks. In after time, allured by the munificence of Alfred, he came into England, and at our monastery (of Malmesbury), as report says, was pierced with iron styles of the boys whom he was instructing, and was even looked upon as a martyr."

Roger of Hoveden tells the same story; and there is clearly no confusion in the mind of either writer between Erigena and Alfred's Abbot John of Athelney. Nor, considering the imputation of heresy against him, thrice confirmed by the Roman Church, is there anything improbable in the murder of Erigena about the year 884 by his pupils, urged into the fit spirit of theologic hate.

Erigena has a place of his own in the history of human speculation as the founder of Scholasticism. The great religious houses had in their earliest time been centres for the diffusion of the Christian faith among the people, and for the devout contemplation of God by the most intelligent and zealous of the early converts. Their

Scholasticism.

first relation to the outer world was that of missionary centres; but they prepared the minds of men by the diffusion of all knowledge that could lift them to higher thought, and soften the relations between man and man. They laid right stress upon good works. They used their gardens for experiment upon the introduction into one country of useful fruits and herbs found in another. They had beds for the sick and wounded. They had schools for the instruction of both young and old. The schools in the great minsters became centres of education, and the chief part of the machinery of secular teaching, created by the Church, remained in the hands of the Church. All secular subjects were taught with more or less reference to the religious aim. But in the several classes, whilst divinity was taught by simple and direct communication of the dogmas of the Church, all other subjects were reasoned out in the Church schools according to the manner of the time, with help from Aristotle and Plato. But the logic and philosophy associated with all other parts of the scholastic system were dropped at the threshold when the divinity class was entered by the scholar. There all was to be simple faith in what heads of the Church had laid down as the true interpretation of the Word of God. All use of logic was repudiated. Tertullian formulated that repudiation in the boldest way, with his *Credo quia absurdum.* But exception of divinity from methods of instruction used in all the other teaching of the schools could not be permanent, and the first change was to the period of what is known as the Scholastic Philosophy.

Scholasticism retained the principle of an unquestioning acceptance of the dogmas of the Church, but introduced into the divinity classes of the schools the same methods of reasoning that were applied to other subjects. The facts were not indeed developed as conclusions from the reasoning; they were taken as axioms, and the reasoning was then

developed from the facts. Scholasticism began with Erigena, because he was the first who acted on the declaration that there can be no real conflict between Reason and Scripture, and who applied to the study of theology the philosophic methods of his time. So long as this endeavour to harmonise the teaching of theology with other teaching in the schools was continued without essential departure from the principle that dogmas of the Church are above question, scholasticism lived. When the reason in the teaching ceased to respect the dogma, scholasticism died. It was born from among us by the bold teaching of Erigena—whose name suggests that a dash of Celtic blood might easily have passed into his life—and it died, early in the fourteenth century, in the writings of another English thinker, William Occam.

Erigena in his teaching set out with the doctrine that there is perfect harmony between Reason and Revelation; that true Religion is identical with true Philosophy. The source of both is the Divine Wisdom, and they cannot contradict each other. The highest aim of philosophy is, he taught, contemplation of God in His own nature, and in Man, who is His image; so that the philosopher comes by intellectual vision into immediate contact with the absolute. Many things are incomprehensible. Faith, he said, must precede knowledge; authority—though it be, as a principle of action, apart from and below reason—is necessary for all who are not capable of independent reflection; and faith itself is but the ground from which there springs through reason—which understands what is true in belief—knowledge of God. All depends in philosophy upon the point of view. A part seen separately may be a disturbing contradiction; while if we take in at one view the whole ground, it will develop into harmony and beauty. It is the power of large view in speculation that alone makes a right, pious, and Catholic philosopher.

The way of research, said Erigena, is by four stages: Divide, Define, Illustrate (the unknown by the known), and Analyse. His division of Nature was into four species: the Creator Uncreate; the Creator Created (the Word, or Son of God, through whom all things are); the Created, not Creating (the world and its creatures); the neither Created nor Creating (God, into whom all things return, and in whom they will be at rest). The gist of his argument was, that in God all things begin and end; and that the whole system of Philosophy tends to a knowledge of the Unity of the Creator. Erigena denied eternity of evil. It is, he said, the opposite to the eternal God, and therefore not eternal. It is a corruption of good, and a vice is a spoilt virtue; it can have no substantial existence. It will disappear when all returns to God. The doctrine of eternal fire Erigena treated as a material adaptation of a spiritual thought to the unstrengthened faith. His book on the Division of Nature, developing his reasons with lively force in form of dialogue between pupil and master, has been, not unjustly, described as the starting-point both of the Scholasticism, and of the Mysticism of theology, in the next centuries. Of his theology it is not for this book to treat. What we have here especially to notice is the symbolic character of all this mystical philosophy; and the further incitement given by the dramatic freshness with which its distinctions and interpretations are evolved to that turn for allegory which was very manifest already in the scholars of the monasteries. Erigena, for example, in one passage illustrates his whole scheme of the world by applying to it, as an allegory, the Scripture story of Pharaoh and the Israelites. He speaks of an imagined Pharaoh—the devil—from whom one form of the departure of our nature is, under its spiritual guide (Moses), who leads by the safe path of human life through the divided depths of the reasoning powers (the Red Sea), and brings into

subjection the multitude of the vices (the rebellious people); so that, after the fleshly thoughts (men) have perished in the wilderness of the virtues, where all that is perishable decays, man's nature will come spiritually into the promised land with the sons of good works. Again, of Paradise, he says that it may have existed in the material world, or may be spiritual, or it may be both spiritual and material; and then, preferring the third view, he figures Paradise as man himself: Adam, as *νοῦς*, the intellectual part; Eve, as *αἴσθησις*, the æsthetic; Christ, the water-spring; and God, the source of life, that flows through Eden, that is to say, through the spirit of man, and has four outlets in the four cardinal virtues. Phison, in Greek Ganges, is Prudence; Gihon, the Nile, is Self-restraint; the swift tumultuous Tigris is Courage; the Euphrates, Justice; and the parallel is thus pursued through many details.

Although the influence of Erigena was great, in spite of his condemnation in his lifetime by the Synods of Valentia and Langres, and by letters of Pope Nicolas, his system never was admitted as the code of a distinct school of philosophy. Parts of his teaching became current, as parts only had been condemned. Especially condemned were his views of predestination and his denial of the miraculous and actual transformation of the bread and wine of the Sacrament, which, in a lost book of his, he taught should be received spiritually. His system was eclectic. He sought truth with acute study, placing reason high above authority; and he was somewhat nearer in his mysticism to the pure ideal of Plato than to the less spiritual idealisation of the Platonist. If he deserves the name given to him sometimes as the father of Western scholastic philosophy, he earns it, not for his dogmatism, but by the honour due to him of being the first who taught distinctively and effectively the certain truth that between true religion and a true

philosophy there is and can be no antagonism, but that they are one and inseparable.*

* I have taken, in this notice, one or two suggestions from Dr. Theodor Christlieb:—"Leben und Lehre des Joh. Scotus Erigena in ihrem Zusammenhang mit der vorhergehenden und unter Angabe ihrer Berührungspuncte mit der neueren Philosophie und Theologie, dargestellt von Dr. Theodor Christlieb, Pastor der deutschen evang. Kirche, Islington, London. Mit Vorwort von Professor Dr. Landerer" (Gotha, 1860). The stout protest of an orthodox Roman Catholic against the recent tendency of even Roman Catholic professors to revive with honour the name of Erigena, although the pope of his day did condemn him, is by Dr. Nicolas Möllers, Professor of the Catholic University at Louvain, in Belgium. "Johannes Scotus Erigena und seine Irrthümer" (Mayence, 1844). I have made some use also of a short Latin monograph of Erigena, "De Joanne Scoto Erigena Commentatio" (Bonn, 1845), and more of O. Grüber's comprehensive article upon Erigena in Ersch and Grüber's *Allgemeine Encyklopädie.* Valuable notices of Erigena are to be found in M. Guizot's "History of Civilization in France," and in the Rev. F. D. Maurice's Encyclopædia Metropolitana Treatise on Mediæval Philosophy. See also Kuno Fischer's "History of Modern Philosophy," vol. i. ch. 4. This volume, chiefly on Descartes and his school, has been translated into English by J. P. Cordy, Ph.D., and edited by Dr. Noah Porter (London, 1887).

CHAPTER XII.

KING ALFRED.

ATTENTION is now due to another Celtic writer. A Latin "History of the Britons" of obscure origin is ascribed to a writer called Nennius on the authority of the Prologue or Prologues contained in some of the manuscripts; for two Prologues are extant, which agree in many particulars, and both ascribe the work to Nennius, the disciple of Elbodus or Elvodugus, and one, the longer one, which is found only in a single MS.,* assigns a date to its authorship, namely, the year 858. An Elbodus, Bishop of North Wales, died in the year 809. There is a discrepancy of thirty-eight years between the body of the work and the longer Prologue as to the date corresponding to the twenty-fourth year of the sovereign Mervin, King of the Britons, who was upon the throne when the whole was said to have been written. There were two kings of that name in the ninth century. One died in the year 844, the other in 903. Both dates are inconsistent with the date given in the longer Prologue (858). No MS. earlier than the twelfth century contains a Prologue, and internal evidence only sets forth, with variation of date in different copies, that the work was written in the year after the Passion of our Lord 796, or 800, or 822, or 879, or in the year of the world 6108, which would be, according to the History

Nennius.

* This MS. is in the Library of the University of Cambridge. It is of the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century.

itself, A.D. 980. A Paris MS., written in the thirteenth century, adds 647 years to A.D. 347, there assigned to the arrival of the Saxons, and thus brings down the period of composition to the year 994. The confusion and uncertainty on the subject of this "History of the Britons" caused it to be ascribed to Gildas in some of the copies. The earliest MS. —which twice refers to the year 946 or 947—ascribes the work neither to Nennius nor to Gildas, but to "Marcus the Anachorite, a bishop of the British nation." Constantius Hericus, who wrote an account of the Life and Miracles of St. Germanus, which he dedicated in 876 or 877 to Charles the Bald, cites as authority for several miracles wrought by Germanus, "a certain old man named Mark, a bishop of the British nation and a native of that island." And he quotes as from the dictation of Mark the adventures of Germanus and the cowherd as we find them in the "History of the Britons." But if Mark was an old man in 877 he could not have lived to refer in his book to the year 946, and it is indeed most probable that the work as we now have it has received addition from several hands.

In substance this "Historia Britonum" is clearly of Cymric origin, being a confused depository of British historical traditions, setting out with the Trojan origin of the Britons, interrupting the reign of Vortigern, which is told as from genuine old tradition, with a long account of the miracles of St. Germanus; a second time thrusting Germanus abruptly into the narrative; telling the legend of St. Patrick where nothing whatever in the context calls for it, and ending with an account of the exploits of Arthur and the twelve battles in which he routed the Saxons. The frequent recurrence of the number three, in consonance with the Cymric partiality for triads, and such statements as that a tower of glass was discovered in the middle of the sea, that Vortigern's castle, overthrown by magic, could be built only by sprinkling with the blood of a boy who had no

father, or that King Arthur with his own hand slew 960 men in one battle, show the legendary spirit of the work.*

"Historia Britonum."

The History ascribed to Nennius is associated with a collection of pieces which have grown about the original work. There is (*a*) the larger Prologue, unknown before the twelfth century; and there is (*b*) the shorter Prologue, which was made from it. There is (*c*) a series of full chapter headings, which are found only in the Cambridge MS., and are, like the Prologue, of later addition. They include, in headings to chapters xxix., xxxvi., and xlviii., references to matter that is not contained in the work itself—namely, the destruction of the Pelagian heresy by Germanus, the name of Rowena, daughter of Hengist, and the second coming of Germans into Britain. There is (*d*) a more ancient body of Calculi which, if not by the original author, are in many MSS., including the earliest. They include their own date, which is, in the Harleian MS., the oldest, 831; in the Cambridge MS., 832; but in a thirteenth century MS. belonging to the Chapter Library at Durham, it is 912. Other MSS. give one or other of these three dates, except a MS. in the Vatican, which makes the date 976.

Next follows (*e*) the work itself, "Historia Britonum," which marks the date of its composition in this opening sentence: "Four hundred and twenty-nine years are reckoned from the year when the Saxons first came into

* The best edition of Nennius is that published in 1838 by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson for the English Historical Society. The oldest MS. is of the tenth century, Harleian 3859 (fol. 135 b), but there are about thirty more, three being of the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century, a dozen of the twelfth, eight of the thirteenth, and four or five of the fourteenth. The chief later studies of Nennius are by Karl Wilhelm Schœll, "De Ecclesiasticæ Britonum Scotorumque Historiæ Fontibus" (Berlin, 1851), and "L'Historia Britonum attribuée à Nennius, et l'Historia Britannica avant Geoffroi de Monmouth, par Arthur de la Borderie" (Paris, 1883).

Britain to the fourth year of King Mervin." There was no reason in the text for mentioning King Mervin; a reason could lie only in the fact that the fourth year of King Mervin stood for the then present time of writing. The King Mervin, of whom it is recorded in the "Annals of Cambria" that he died in the year 844, is said in an ancient chronicle, the "Brut of Twysogion," to have begun to reign in the year 818. That would make 822 the year in which the supposed Nennius began to write. As the date 831 is ascribed, in the Harleian MS., to the earliest form of the preceding Calculi, M. Arthur de la Borderie, from whom I take these calculations, believes that he is here touching on firm ground. It is true that a clause follows, a few lines later, which involves the date 859; but this clause can fairly be set aside as one of the interpolations made by later copyists. So the copyist who put into the Calculi the date 912 said that it was the thirtieth year of Anaraut, King of Venedocia (North Wales), and Anaraut died, according to the "Annals of Cambria," in 915. After the "Historia Britonum" follow (*f*) in six manuscripts Genealogies of Saxon Kings. These seem to have been written by a north countryman who lived between the Dee and Clyde. They are interspersed with short original accounts of battles between the Britons and the Angles of Northumbria within the years from 547 to 655. The writer gives the British names of places, not the Teutonic. His notes supplement and agree with the records of Bede and the Saxon Chronicle. These genealogies seem to be of the end of the seventh century, and are more ancient than the History to which they are attached. To this seventh century record addition was made of Kings of Mercia to the year 716, and of Northumbria to 738. Then follow two pieces more, (*g*) Cities, and (*h*) Wonders of Britain. These are in all but two of the MSS., and they may be of the tenth century.

Omitting a Life of St. Patrick which has been joined to

it, the "Historia Britonum" itself is in five parts: Description of the Island; Origin of the Britons and Scots; Britain under the Romans; History of Vortigern; and Deeds of Arthur. This last part is short; but we have in Nennius the germ of the story of Merlin, and Arthur victorious in twelve great battles.

We shall hear more of King Arthur; but our path now brings us into the presence of King Alfred. King Alfred, who did not until after the sixteenth century receive his surname of the Great, was descended from that Cerdic who, landing in 495 on the south coast of England, founded the kingdom of Wessex. Of Alfred's predecessors, Ina, who began to reign in the year 688, had been the first who, besides fighting, had worked for the social welfare of his kingdom. He caused the laws of his land to be committed to writing, and they have descended to our time in the collection made by order of King Alfred. It was King Ina who had made Aldhelm Bishop of Sherborne. King Ina abdicated in 725, and went with his wife Ethelburh to Rome, where they both ended their days in exercises of religion. After Ina's reign Wessex was much troubled by strife about the crown, until Beorhtric, who married a daughter of the strong Mercian King Offa, with Offa's help excluded Egbert, who had chief hereditary right. Beorhtric succeeded Cynewulf, who was killed by some of his own people in the year 786. Beorhtric reigned in peace until he died of poison mixed by his wife for one of his favourite ealdormen. Charlemagne was then on his way to be crowned Emperor of the West, and Egbert, who had spent at the court and in the camp of Charlemagne his thirteen years of exile and apprenticeship to sovereignty, took possession of the throne to which his right was clear.

Egbert's England.

This was the king who, according to contestable authorities of the late Anglo-Norman period, at a Witenagemot held at Winchester, first gave to the provinces over which he

ruled the name of Anglia, or England. From his reign all the chroniclers agree in speaking no more of Bretwaldas, but thenceforth of kings of England. It was in Egbert's time that the power of the South first mastered that of the North, his forces being victorious even beyond the Humber. The predominance of the West Saxons was established. Nevertheless, while his superior power was known, Egbert's own kingdom, stretching from Kent westwards, did not extend north of the Thames.

The Northmen or Danes.

It was in Egbert's reign, too, that the northmen of the Scandinavian continent and islands, called Danes by the Anglo-Saxons, became widely known as fighting emigrants, who visited the coasts of England, France, and even Spain. They had made their first recorded attack in the year 789, year of the marriage of Beorhtric to Offa's daughter, then landing from three ships upon the coast of Dorsetshire. In 843 fifty-four of their vessels went up the Guadalquivir as far as Seville. In 834 they had landed on Sheppey Island; in the following year they appeared with thirty-five ships before Charmouth in Dorsetshire. In 836 they came again, and finding Egbert prepared for them, were beaten at Hingston Down; Egbert also punished the Cymry for having favoured them. Egbert, dying in 837, was succeeded by his weaker son Ethelwulf, who, as heir-apparent, had been, under his father, King of Kent, and whose office as King of Kent passed to his own son Athelstane.

Swithun.

The chief guide of Ethelwulf in arts of peace was Swithun, a monk of Winchester, who was ordained priest in the year 830, and whose repute for learning had caused Egbert to commit to him the instruction of his son. It was by Swithun's advice that, in 853, Ethelwulf sent his youngest son Alfred, then only five years old, to Rome, with a large retinue, including perhaps Swithun himself. Two years afterwards, having, by Swithun's

advice, given a tenth of his kingdom to the Church, Ethelwulf went to Rome himself, with his son Alfred, taking extravagant gifts and ordaining from his private property that perpetual annuity to Rome for the salvation of his soul which was the foundation of the claim of "Peter's Pence." He stayed at Rome for a year, and on his return married, as second or third wife, Judith, the daughter of Charles the Bald, King of the West Franks, the bride being then only thirteen years old. Ethelwulf was met by civil war on his return to England, his old counsellor the fighting Bishop Ealhstan, and his own son Ethelbald, being chiefs of the insurrection. He yielded to his son a large part of his kingdom, and died two years and a half later, in the year 858. Swithun survived four or five years in his bishopric of Winchester, where he had repaired churches and built a bridge, living to see the city plundered by the Northmen, who since the year 834 had made fitfully their fierce descents.

As King of Kent, Ethelwulf had married, probably after a first wife of his youth who was the mother of Athelstane, Osburh, the daughter of his cupbearer Oslac, Jute by race and descended from a nephew of Cerdic. Alfred's biographer, Asser, calls Osburh "a most pious woman, noble of mind and of blood." Ethelbald was the eldest, Alfred was the youngest, of her children. When Ethelbald already was a youth, Alfred was born in the year 849, at Wantage, one of the numerous royal villas to which the Kings of Wessex, who had not a capital, shifted their court at will. When Ethelbald died, Ethelbert, King of Kent, set aside the succession of Ethelred established by his father's will. Alfred's age was eleven, and he lived with the new king, his brother, of whose reign there are extant documents bearing the signature of Alfred. In spite of the decay of learning and the general confusion caused by the frequent attacks of the Northmen, Prince Alfred was now

Alfred.

following a natural bent for study, labouring to write and read, and learn by heart, as he took pleasure in doing, the old songs of the people. King Ethelbert died in the year 866, Alfred's age then being seventeen, and Ethelred, the third brother, succeeded him; retaining, because of the danger to the coast, Kent, not as the kingdom of the heir-apparent, but as part of Wessex.* Alfred was recognised as the king's heir and deputy.

But in the beginning of the reign of Ethelred the Northmen, or Danes, wafted over by the autumnal east wind of the year 866, made a concerted attack of unprecedented violence upon the eastern coast of Britain, with the design of forming settlements. The East Angles of the coast made terms with them at once, and gave them winter quarters. In the spring the Northmen set out on a desolating march by the banks of the Humber, stripping and burning churches and monasteries. It was then that Abbess Hilda's monastery of Streoneshalh, the religious home of Cædmon, was destroyed; and Danish occupation afterwards gave to the place the name of Whitby. The Northmen destroyed much; but, towards the end of the following winter the Northumbrians, making head against them, drove them with thinned numbers into York. In York they were beset so closely that in March, 868, they made a fierce sally, and cut their way through the besieging force. Many chiefs and the two Northumbrian kings were left among the dead. Setting up north of the Tyne a king of their own nomination, and themselves holding the region to the south, the Northmen in the following winter marched into Mercia and took Nottingham Castle. Alfred, in Wessex, was then in his twentieth year, just married to Ealhswiθ, daughter of a great Lincolnshire

The Danes in England.

* He signed himself "Rex Occidentalium Saxonum, necnon et Cantuariorum."

earl, and a descendant of the royal family of Mercia. The wedding-feast was held in Mercia, and in the midst of the rejoicing Alfred was seized by a strange illness—probably epilepsy—that remained by him, so that he was never sure of not being attacked by it. When the visitation came he was powerless; but the repose of a day, or night, or even an hour, would revive him.

The forces of Wessex were, after Alfred's marriage, joined to those of Mercia, and even the priests took sword in hand against the spoilers of the churches and the abbeys. The Danes were besieged in Nottingham Castle. Not overcome, but treated with, they went back to York; and, after a little while, again marched south as far as Thetford, headed by "Ingvar of the mighty mind and Ubba of the wonderful daring." *

Nearly at the same time another division of Northmen from the Humber plundered and burnt the monastery and massacred the monks of Bardeney in Lindesey. Nobles and monks mustered in force against them, and killed three of their chiefs on the first day's fight; but in the night the Danes were reinforced by Ingvar and Ubba, and by other chiefs, among whom were a Healfdene and Guthrum; and the next day's battle was a Danish victory, followed by the havoc of the abbeys at Croyland, Peterborough, Huntingdon, and Ely.† At Thetford, too, the Northmen were victorious. East Anglia, paganised again, was ruled by Guthrum. Other leaders were the masters of Northumbria, and now the Thames was entered by Danes under the chiefs Healfdene and Bagsecg, and their Earls Osbearn, Frene, Harald, and two Sidrocs, who, spreading in separate bodies over the southern coast, seized as their convenient head-quarters the royal castle at Reading, whence they had

* Henry of Huntingdon.

† The story of this battle is told in detail by Ingulph of Croyland.

a ready water-street between them and the sea. In the attempt to recover Reading, Ethelred and Alfred were defeated, but four days afterwards the Northmen were beaten at a battle of Ashdown, in which Alfred distinguished himself by boldness of successful attack, and Ethelred with his own hand killed Healfdene's brother-king. The Northmen, still holding Reading, claimed a fortnight afterwards the victory in the next battle, at Basing; and the extension of their ravages is shown by the fact that the next battle was at Merton, where Ethelred and Alfred were victorious during a great part of the day, but left the Danes at night possessors of the field.

Soon after this defeat Ethelred died, in the spring of the year 871. Alfred, aged twenty-two, succeeded, and in the first summer of his reign a large fleet of Northmen arrived at their head-quarters in Reading. At the end of the year, Alfred, with the consent of his nobles, paid the Danes money for peace. They then crossed the Thames, established their winter quarters near London, and sailed out of the Thames again in the winter of 872, on promise of tribute from Alfred's relation, Burhred, King of Mercia, who there ruled. But they went no farther than to Northumbria; then again visited Lindesey, penetrated to the heart of Mercia, and destroyed the monastery of Repton, where the former kings of Mercia were buried. Burhred, after a reign of twenty-two years, went to Rome as a pilgrim, and there died. The Northmen set up a tributary puppet-king, deposing him when he became less flexible than they required. They made none of their own chiefs supreme, although over a large part of the eastern coast of England they were now settled as peaceful colonists in towns and villages, where their descendants still inherit many of their names, much of their bodily form, and contribute to the common stock of English something of their language.

Alfred King.

Rollo, who won in France firm footing for the Northmen, lived at this time, and had been with the rest in England; the subsequent Norman conquest of England being a conquest by descendants of the brethren of these Northmen, who were in King Alfred's time finding their way up the Seine as well as up the Thames. But while their character was in France considerably modified by marriage with the native women, they were in England very little modified by intermarrying with a Teutonic race related closely to their own, and that was in part, indeed, an old graft from precisely the same stock.

In the year 875 the Northmen in this country who remained in arms formed two armies. That of the North was under Healfdene, and that of the South under Guthrum. There was little more to be taken from the Angles of the plains, and an attack was now made on the Cymry, who still occupied Strathclyde along the western coast from Clyde to Cumberland. But here there was no wealth. Healfdene's warriors were compelled to parcel out the ground and labour upon it themselves for food, if they would eat. Guthrum and his host settled in Cambridge, and seized Warham on the coast of Dorset. Again King Alfred partly bought them off with gold. But they kept Warham, and seized Exeter, where also the Cymry were numerous, and where Rollo spent a winter with them; thence also they sent assistance to their friends who were plundering the French seaport towns. But when the Northmen had lost most of their ships in a great storm, they in turn sought and made terms with Alfred for their departure out of Exeter. They went, some northward to settle in Mercia, some to join in an attack upon the Cymry of South Wales; but here again they found a race no richer than that of Strathclyde. Reckless of compacts, the Northmen maintained a fresh attack on Wessex by sea and land in the year 878. The whole country was now

overrun, and the Cymry, while grieving for themselves, perhaps did not lament the retribution that seemed to have fallen on their former conquerors.*

It was then that Alfred, instead of flying across to France like many of his nobles, or giving himself up to a devout end in Rome, withdrew to a secure winter retreat among the marshes of Somerset, where the Parrot joins the Thone. There he threw up defensive works and lived in Athelney, the Island of Princes, with a small band of nobles and warriors, who snatched their food from the surrounding enemy. Alfred of Athelney was made, after a few generations, by the songs and stories of the people, the hero of such fables as that of the burning of loaves in the cowherd's oven, or of his visit disguised as a minstrel to the Danish camp; the Church, too, afterwards told how the good king read the Psalms, and was miraculously sustained and comforted. But he went there simply to levy war. Only wintering at Athelney, he rallied to his standard during the winter months the chiefs of Somerset, organised diligently a new muster of troops, and marching out in the following May to Selwood Forest, was joined on an appointed day by troops from Somerset, Wilts, Hants, and Dorset. On the next day he marched with his army against the Northmen at Chippenham, and after one more night's rest came upon them and defeated them in battle. Then he besieged them, and at the end of a fortnight forced from them promises to depart, with offer of as many hostages as he would take. Their chief Guthrum at the same time declared his willingness to become a Christian, and, Alfred being his godfather, he was baptised with all his followers. Alfred agreed to leave to the Northmen their colony in East Anglia, between which and his own territory there were settled boundaries that left to Alfred a

* Ethelwerd speaks of a "civilis discordia sæva."

considerable part of Mercia. The treaty was broken, and it is said by Norman writers that Rollo came over to help Guthrum in the breaking of it; but on the whole the Danes were thenceforth kept to their East Anglian settlement, where they lived by their industry and blended with the English people.

So much of the earlier political history of Alfred belongs to the story of the formation of the English language, by accounting for its later Scandinavian element. The rest of his reign belongs to the history of English literature.

King Alfred's Laws.

The influence of the Church at this period was conspicuous not in literature only. King Alfred's laws, which are made to follow those of Ina, begin by taking laws of Moses from the Scripture—the Decalogue in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, with extracts from the laws that follow to the end of chapter twenty-three. Alfred passes then, after a few words of his own, to New Testament ordinances, which are summed up with the text, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" to which is added, "By this one commandment man shall know whether he does right, then he will require no other law-book." The Laws are in four parts: Introduction; Laws of Ina; Laws of Alfred; The peace between Alfred and Guthrum.* Thus King Alfred ends the Introduction to his Laws: "I now, King Alfred, gathered these together and commanded to be written many of those that our forefathers held which seemed to me good, and many of those which did not seem to me good I put away with the advice of my Witan, and ordered them to be

* Alfred's Laws are in four MSS., of which three are in England; two in the Library of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, and one in the Cotton Collection in the British Museum, Nero, E, i. These are tenth century MSS. The fourth is the Textus Roffensis of the Twelfth Century. The Peace between Alfred and Guthrum is only in the Corpus Christi College MSS.

observed in another manner. For I dared not be so bold as to set many laws of my own in the writing, because it was unknown to me how far they might seem good to those who should come after us. But of those which I found, either of the time of Ina, my kinsman, or of the time of Offa, King of the Mercians, or of Ethelbert, who first received baptism among the English, such as seemed most right I gathered here, and the rest I left out. I then, Alfred, King of the West Saxons, showed these to all my Witan, and they then declared that it seemed good to them that all should be obeyed."

Within twenty years the religious element in common laws and the influences of constant intercourse made Christians of the Danes upon the Eastern coast, but their assaults had broken up the active intellectual organisation of the Church at large, and Alfred had to lament* "that there are only a few on this side of the Humber who can understand the Divine Service, or even explain a Latin epistle in English; and, I believe, not many on the other side of the Humber either. But they are so few, that indeed I cannot remember one south of the Thames when I began to reign." Alfred strengthened his relations with Rome as the centre of religious life, and is even said by contemporary annals to have opened the first intercourse between England and India by sending, in fulfilment of a vow, a mission with rich presents to the Christian colony supposed to have been founded in the remote East by the preaching of St. Thomas. Among his chief advisers and helpers in the revival of the English Church were Werefrith, of Worcester; Plegmund, another Mercian, who was made Primate on the death of Archbishop Athelred in 890, and survived

Decay of learning.

Alfred's advisers.

* In the preface to his translation of the "Regula Pastoralis" of Gregory I.

to the year 923; Grimbald, whom Alfred brought from among the Franks, and made Abbot of the Winchester new monastery; John, the old Saxon—sometimes confounded with John Erigena—who was brought from the monastery of Corvey to be established in a new monastery on the Island of Athelney; and Asser, who became the king's biographer.

Asser, invited out of Wales, first came to the king at his royal seat of Dene (West or East Dean, near Chichester), in the year 884. He was four days with Alfred, and being pressed wholly to cross the Severn and devote himself to the king's service, hesitated, he says of himself, "to desert the holy spot where I had been born, educated, and consecrated, for the sake of worldly might and splendour." Then Alfred urged that Asser should be for six months of the year with the king, and for the other six at his Welsh monastery of St. David's. The monk would not agree to that without the consent of his community, but promised to return to the king in six months with a satisfactory answer. On his way into Wales he was seized with a fever, and lay ill at Winchester for twelve months and a week, whereby he was prevented from returning at the stipulated time; Alfred sent, therefore, messengers to seek him. It was then agreed that it would be for the well-being of the monastery that Asser should divide his time between the king's court and St. David's. The king at first kept his new councillor for eight months with him at his court in Leonaford, and, when he was resolved at Christmas (886) to go to Wales, gave him two monasteries with all that pertained to them, a costly silk pallium, and as much incense as a man could carry; telling him that he had given him so little in order that hereafter he might give him more. At Midsummer Asser would return, according to agreement, to stay till the next following Christmas, 887. And the king gave him

Asser.

afterwards Exeter, with a parish (it was not at that time a bishopric). Having made Asser an abbot, Alfred made him also a bishop, of what see it is not said; but he died, in the year 910, Bishop of Sherborne. In all this the plan of Alfred was to re-establish monasteries as the nervous centres of his kingdom, seats of thought and of true life. Through them he hoped to revive and spread the education of the entire people; his wish being, as expressed in his own words,* "that the whole body of free-born youths in his kingdom, who possess the means, may be obliged to learn as long as they have to attend to no other business, until they can read English writing perfectly; and then let those who are dedicated to learning and the service of the Church be instructed in Latin." Alfred had made many efforts at self-instruction when he selected Asser as his tutor. He could read, but it is doubtful whether he could write with his own hand. "One day," says Asser, "as we were both sitting in the royal chamber, conversing in the usual manner, it happened that I mentioned to him a passage out of some book. After listening with eager attention and following me with great curiosity, he hastily took out the little book which he was in the habit of carrying with him perpetually, and in which the daily lessons, psalms, and prayers were inscribed, which he had been accustomed to read in his youth, and requested that I would insert the quotation in the book." Asser prepared to write, but, finding the book everywhere filled with notes already made, suggested the beginning of a separate collection of the passages that pleased the king. "That is a good thought," said Alfred. A quaternian, of four pieces of vellum doubled together, so that each made two leaves,

Alfred's labour for a revival of learning.

Alfred's Manual.

* Preface to his translation of the "Regula Pastoralis," Bodleian MS. Hatton 20.

or the whole made sixteen pages—then the usual form of the sheet of a book—was at once arranged, the passage entered, and before the end of the same day three other extracts had been added to it. The day was said by Asser to be the Feast of St. Martin, the 11th of November, 887. The book grew at last to the bulk of a Psalter, and was called by the King his Manual. It was known in the middle of the twelfth century, but no MS. copy of it has been found. Fragments that have been quoted, especially by William of Malmesbury, show that it must have contained, besides passages from the Bible and the writings of the Fathers, the king's original notes on the early history of his own house and of his people, and, so far, his only original work; for all King Alfred's works that remain to us are translations, never literal, sometimes, indeed, with important additions, and usually coloured or varied more or less into harmony with his own mind and his practical and religious Anglo-Saxon purpose of diffusing useful knowledge. He was, in our literature, the first translator.

Alfred's Boëthius.

The most popular of these, and probably the first, was his translation of Boëthius "On the Consolation of Philosophy," which is preserved in two old manuscripts.* William of Malmesbury says that Asser explained to King Alfred the sense of the books of Boëthius, and that the king then turned them into English. This would imply an early stage in Alfred's studies with Asser, so that we might suppose the translation made in the year 888. Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boëthius, a Roman patrician, who was born between the years 470 and 475, and whose father, consul in the year 487, died during his youth, attained to the consulship himself in the year 508 or 510, at which time he was occupying himself with a commentary

* In the Cotton Library, Otho, A, vi. sec. x. In the Bodleian MS. 180, sec. xii.

on the Predicaments of Aristotle. He held also at Rome some other office of note in association with an evil-disposed colleague named Decoratus. He married Rusticana, the daughter of the Consular Symmachus, and his two sons were both named early to the consulship. Boëthius, distinguished for his learning, obtained high confidence from the Emperor Theodoric, and used it for protection and assurance of the liberties of Rome. He resisted the oppressions of the strong men of the court, the injustice of Conigastus, and of the major-domo Triguilla, and made himself hated by the avaricious tribe of the young courtiers whom he opposed. He translated and wrote commentaries upon all Aristotle's works, translated and edited also Plato, Euclid, and Nicomachus. It was afterwards maintained that as a Christian he entered fiercely into controversies on behalf of the Roman see, and was especially vigorous against the Arians. This opinion, which appears in the opening of King Alfred's introduction to his translation, helped to give popularity to the name of Boëthius among churchmen, who seem to have used his "Consolation of Philosophy" as a school-book in their monasteries. The story went, as given by King Alfred, that Boëthius "observed the manifold evil which the King Theodoric did against Christendom and against the Roman senators. He then called to mind the ancient rights which they had under the Cæsars, their ancient lords. Then began he to inquire and study in himself how he might take the kingdom from the unrighteous king, and bring it under the power of the faithful and righteous men. He therefore privately sent letters to the Cæsar (Justinus) at Constantinople, which is the chief city of the Greeks and their king's dwelling-place, because the Cæsar was of the kin of their ancient lords. They prayed him that he would succour them with respect to their Christianity and their ancient rights. When the cruel King Theodoric discovered this he gave orders to

take him to prison, and there lock him up." This was the Church tradition. But the truth seems to be that Boëthius lived and died a heathen philosopher, and that the writings against the Arians ascribed to him are by another hand. He himself states as the sole reason of his imprisonment his increasing influence in the state, and his zeal to advance the freedom and dignity of the senate, which had made the courtiers angry and the king suspicious. A senator, Albinus, having been accused of *lèse-majesté*, Boëthius hurried to Theodoric, who was at Verona, and at his own peril maintained before him the cause of the senators. His enemies being then embittered, three courtiers, Caudentius, Ossilio, and Basilius—two of whom were themselves condemned to banishment—accused Boëthius of treasonable ambition, and produced forged letters dilating on a hope that the old freedom of Rome would be recovered.* The property of Boëthius was confiscated; he was deprived of his dignities, and sentenced, without hearing, to a banishment of forty miles from Rome. Then followed the long imprisonment, during which he wrote his "Consolation," not of Christian hope, but of Philosophy, speaking to him through Wisdom and Reason. He was executed about the year 525, and Procopius tells how his widow Rusticana was reduced to beggary, and the Emperor Theodoric repented of his judicial murder. The clergy, having used the name of Boëthius to give weight to controversial writing, justified the popularity among themselves of his five books of the "Consolation of Philosophy," in prose mingled with verse, by canonising him as a saint in the eighth century, and assigning the 23rd of October as the day of his martyrdom.

But although the work was not that of a Christian, it

* This account, given by Boëthius himself, is sustained by the evidence of Procopius (lib. i.); but what the Church of Rome taught on the subject in King Alfred's time is still commonly credited.

was indeed worthy of honour among Christians. It was the masterpiece of the last man of genius produced by ancient Rome. Boëthius recognised in its first book the wisdom of the God who rules the world, as the great source of consolation; in the second book, that man in his worst misfortunes still possesses much, and that he should fix his mind on the imperishable; in the third book, that God is the chief good, and can work no evil; in the fourth book, that, as seen from above, only the good are strong and happy, while the evil suffer and are weak—also that we should count none happy or unhappy till we see the end; while the fifth book reconciled the relation between God's knowledge of what is necessary with the free will of mankind. This question of Providence and Will was apparently derived by Boëthius from philosophical study of the Christian teaching at Rome, and so grafted on his Platonism. Of the legend that makes him a Christian it is enough to observe that in this work, from the depth of worldly calamity, he turns to explore all sources of true consolation, and does not name Christ.

Both of the great esteem in which the "Consolation" of Boëthius was held by the Church of the middle ages, and of the great influence of the monastic schools, Dr. Pauli found evidence in the fact that "as soon as a newly-formed language began to produce we meet with a version of Boëthius in it; this is also the case with all the most ancient remains of the Old High Germans, the Provençals, and the Northern French; even Chaucer formed himself upon it when he gave England its language. It was presented to the Anglo-Saxons by their best prose writer, their king himself." Of the king's treatment of his author's text, when his own heart was moved to utterance, the most famous example is that in which he thus expands one sentence of Boëthius:*—

* The original sentence is, "Tum ego, Scis, inquam, ipsa minimum

"The mind then answered and thus said: O Reason, indeed thou knowest that covetousness, and the greatness of this earthly power, never well pleased me, nor did I very much yearn after this earthly authority. But nevertheless I was desirous of materials for the work which I was commanded to perform; that was, that I might honourably and fitly guide and exercise the power which was committed to me. Moreover, thou knowest that no man can show any skill, or exercise or control any power, without tools and materials. There are of every craft the materials without which man cannot exercise the craft. These, then, are a king's material and his tools to reign with; that he have his land well peopled; he must have head-men, and soldiers, and workmen. Thou knowest that without these tools no king can show his craft. This is also his material that he must have beside the tools; provision for the three classes. This is, then, their provision; land to inhabit, and gifts and weapons, and meat and ale, and clothes, and whatsoever is necessary for the three classes. He cannot without these preserve the tools, nor without the tools accomplish any of those things which he is commanded to perform. Therefore I was desirous of materials wherewith to exercise the power, that my talents and fame should not be forgotten and hidden. For every craft and every power soon becomes old, and is passed over in silence, if it be without wisdom; and no man can accomplish any craft without wisdom. Because whatsoever is done through folly, no one can ever reckon for craft. This is now especially to be said, that I wished to live honourably whilst I lived, and after my life to leave to the men who were after me my memory in good works."*

The Translation of the Metra.

There is some reason to doubt King Alfred's authorship of the metrical version of the pieces of Latin verse introduced by Boëthius among his prose, the Metra of Boëthius. Three of them—which happen not to be preceded by the usual "Then Wisdom

nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam: sed materiam gerendis rebus optavimus, quo ne virtus tacita consenesceret." Lib. ii. Opening Prosa 7.

* From the translation of Alfred's Boëthius, by the Rev. S. Fox, in vol. iii. (and last) of the Jubilee edition of "The Whole Works of King Alfred the Great: with Preliminary Essays illustrative of the History, Arts, and Manners of the Ninth Century." Oxford and Cambridge, 1852.

began to sing"—the versifier, as Thomas Wright pointed out, overlooked and left as first translated into prose, while Alfred's preface, and even the prose of his first chapter, seem to have been needlessly versified. The two MSS., of which that in the Cotton Collection* is of the tenth, that in the Bodleian of the twelfth century, both contain the verse translations added to the prose translations of the Metra. Evidence is against the belief that Alfred translated them both into prose and verse. The translator was a man of moderate ability, who, at the end of the ninth or in the tenth century, had Alfred's work before him.

Another of King Alfred's labours for the enlightenment of his countrymen was a translation of the "Universal History of Orosius, from the Creation to the year of our Lord 416." This book had long been in high repute by the familiar name of "Orosius" among students and teachers in the monasteries; and it retained its credit so that after the invention of printing it was one of the first works put into type, and appeared in numerous editions. The author was a Spanish Christian of the fifth century. Born at Tarragona and educated in Spain, he crossed over to Africa about the year 414, and received instruction from St. Augustine upon knotty questions of the origin of the soul and other matters. In Augustine's works are contained the "Consultation of Orosius with Augustine on the Error of the Priscillianists and Origenists," and a letter from Augustine to Orosius against them. Augustine sent Orosius to consult Jerome, who was in Palestine; and, in his letter of introduction said, "Behold, there has come to me a religious young man, in catholic peace a brother, in age a son, in rank a

Alfred's Orosius.

* Though this MS. was very greatly damaged by the fire, the fragments were so well put together on a ground of new parchment by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson and Mr. John Holmes that nearly all of it can now be read with ease.

co-presbyter, Orosius—of active talents, ready eloquence, ardent application, longing to be in God's house a vessel useful for disproving false and destructive doctrines, which have killed the souls of Spaniards much more grievously than the barbarian sword their bodies." In Palestine, towards the latter half of the year 415, Orosius attacked the Pelagians by writing against them a treatise on Free Will, and presenting a memorial against them to the Council of Diospolis. It was at the request of St. Augustine that Orosius wrote his History. The sack of Rome by Alaric having caused the Christians of Rome to doubt the efficacy of their faith, Augustine, while he himself wrote his "De Civitate Dei" to show from the history of the Church that the preaching of the Gospel could not augment the world's misery, incited Orosius to show the same thing in a compendium of profane history also. Orosius began his work in the year 410, when Augustine had got through ten books of his, and he finished it about the year 416. Like a good old-fashioned controversialist, he made very light of the argument of terror from the sack of Rome by Alaric, so representing the event that King Alfred, in his translation, thus abridged the detail:—

"Alaric, the most Christian and the mildest of kings, sacked Rome with so little violence that he ordered no man should be slain, and that nothing should be taken away or injured that was in the churches. Soon after that, on the third day, they went out of the city of their own accord. There was not a single house burnt by their order."

In translating and adapting this book to the uses of his time King Alfred did not trouble himself at all with its old ecclesiastical character, as what Pope Gelasius I. had called a book written "with wonderful brevity against heathen perversions." Looking to it exclusively as a digest of historical and geographical information, Alfred abridged, omitted, imitated, added, with a single regard to his purpose of producing a text-book of that class of knowledge.

Omitting the end of the fifth book and the beginning of the sixth, and so running two books into one, he made the next and last book the sixth instead of the seventh, as it is in the original.

The History of Orosius itself is bald, confused, but it was enriched and improved by Alfred's addition to the first book of much new matter, enlarging knowledge of the geography of Europe, which he calls Germania, north of the Rhine and Danube. Alfred adds also to the same book geographical narratives taken from the lips of two travellers. One was Ohthere, a Norwegian, who sailed from Halgoland on the coast of Norway, round the North Cape into the Cwen-Sæ, or White Sea, and entered the mouth of the river Dwina, the voyage ending where there is now Archangel, the most northern of the Russian seaports. Ohthere afterwards made a second voyage from Halgoland along the west and south coast of Norway to the Bay of Christiania, and Sciringeshæl, the port of Skerin, or Skien, near the entrance of the Christiania fjord. He then sailed southward, and reached in five days the Danish port æt Hæðum, the capital town called Sleswic by the Saxons, but by the Danes Haithaby.* The other traveller was Wulfstan, who sailed in the Baltic, from Slesvig in Denmark to Frische Haff within the Gulf of Danzig, reaching the Drausen Sea by Elbing. These voyages were taken from the travellers' own lips. Of Wulfstan's, the narrative passes at one time into the form of direct personal narration—"Wulfstan said that he went . . . . that he had . . . . And then we had on our left the land of the Burgundians [Bornholmians], who had their own king. After the land of the Burgundians we had on our left," &c. The narrative of the other voyage opens with the sentence, "Ohthere told his lord, King Alfred."† These three

* Ethelward.

† "A Description of Europe, and the Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan, written in Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred the Great; with his

additions to Orosius—the Description of Europe, the two voyages of Ohthere, and the voyage of Wulfstan—may be considered Alfred's own works.

The Description is the king's own account of Europe in his time, and the only authentic record of the Germanic nations, written by a contemporary, so early as the ninth century.

Ohthere was a man of great wealth and influence in Norway as wealth was there reckoned; for he had 600 reindeer, including six decoy-deer; but though accounted one of the first men in the land, he had only twenty horned cattle, twenty sheep, and twenty swine. The little that he ploughed he ploughed with horses, and his chief revenue was in tribute of skin and bone from the Finns. The fame of his voyages attracted to him the attention of King Alfred. He said that he dwelt "Northmost of all northmen," in Halgoland; and wishing to find out how far the land lay due north, and whether any man dwelt north of him—for the sake also of taking the walruses, "which have very good bone in their teeth; of these teeth they brought some to the king; and their hides are very good for ship-ropes"—he sailed northward. Ohthere may have obtained some of his wealth by whale-fishing. He says that "in his own country is the best whale-hunting; they are eight-and-forty ells long, and the largest fifty ells long;" of these he said "that he was one of six

account of the Mediterranean Islands, of Africa, and of the History of the World to the year B.C. MCCCCXIII., chiefly taken from Orosius; containing a facsimile copy of the whole Anglo-Saxon text from the Cotton MS., and also from the first part of the Lauderdale MS.—a printed Anglo-Saxon Text, based upon these MSS., and a literal English Translation and Notes. By the Rev. Joseph Bosworth, D.D., &c." (London, 1855). The single objection to this very valuable work was that only fifty copies of it were printed. Dr. Bosworth, however, afterwards incorporated all his information in an admirable eight shilling edition for the general student of Alfred's Orosius (London, 1859).

who killed sixty in two days;" meaning, no doubt, that his vessel was one of six. He relates only what he saw. "The Biarmians," he says, "told him many stories both about their own land and about the countries which were around them, but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself."

Wulfstan was perhaps a Jutlander, and his voyage was confined to the Baltic. Neither his account nor that of Ohthere contradicts the opinion then held that Scandinavia was a large island, and the Gulf of Bothnia or Cwæner Sea flowed into the North Sea. From Wulfstan we have the following particulars of the way of life and burial among the Esthonians:—

"*Wulfstan's Account of the Esthonians.*

"Esthonia is very large, and there are many towns, and in every town there is a king. There is also very much honey and fishing. The king and the richest men drink mare's milk, but the poor and the slaves drink mead. There is very much war among them; and there is no ale brewed by the Esthonians, but there is mead enough. There is also a custom with the Esthonians, that when a man is dead he lies in his house, unburnt, with his kindred and friends a month—sometimes two; and the king and other men of high rank, so much longer according to their wealth, remain unburnt sometimes half a year, and lie above ground in their houses. All the while the body is within there must be drinking and sports to the day on which he is burnt.

"Then, the same day, when they wish to bear him to the pile, they divide his property which is left after the drinking and sports into five or six parts, sometimes into more, as the amount of his property may be. Then they lay the largest part of it within one mile from the town, then another, then the third, till it is all laid, within the one mile, and the least part shall be nearest the town in which the dead man lies. All the men who have the swiftest horses in the land shall then be assembled about five or six miles from the property. Then they all run towards the property, and the man who has the swiftest horse comes to the first and largest part, and so each after the other, till it is all taken; and he takes the least part who runs to the property nearest the town. Then each rides away with the property and may keep it all; and, therefore, swift horses are there uncommonly dear. When

his property is thus all spent, then they carry him out, and burn him with his weapons and clothes. Most commonly they spend all his wealth with the long lying of the dead within, and what they lay in the way, which the strangers run for, and take away.

"It is also a custom with the Esthonians that there men of every tribe must be burned; and if anyone find a single bone unburnt, they shall make a great atonement. There is also among the Esthonians a power of producing cold, and therefore the dead lie there so long and decay not, because they bring the cold upon them; and if a man sets two vats full of ale or of water, they cause that either shall be frozen over, whether it be summer or winter."

This is the only full detail of manners in King Alfred's usually condensed geographical digest.*

* The MSS. of Orosius are the Lauderdale, written in the end of the ninth century, and the Cotton, which Dr. Bosworth thinks is a copy from the Lauderdale, in the tenth. A transcript of the Cotton MS. made by Junius in or about 1658 is in the Bodleian, and transcripts of the transcript by Junius were made by William Elstob in 1698 and by George Ballard in 1751. Elstob's is in the Library of Trinity College, Oxford; Ballard's belongs to the Society of Antiquaries. The Lauderdale MS., which is the original of all these copies, has been described by Dr. Bosworth, in a short history, of which only twenty-four copies were printed for private circulation, but of which the substance is included in the introduction to his student's edition of Orosius. It is named after its former possessor, the Duke of Lauderdale, the royalist, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester in 1651, and became Secretary of State, President of the Council, High Commissioner of Scotland, and (in 1672) Duke of Lauderdale, after the Restoration. In 1677 Dr. George Hickes, the chief student of Anglo-Saxon and northern languages in his day, went with Lauderdale to Scotland as his chaplain; and in 1688 Hickes first included in a catalogue of Anglo-Saxon MSS. the Lauderdale Orosius, mentioning incidentally that it was formerly the property of Dr. John Dee, the astrologer. Dee spent £3,000 on MSS., and died poor, "enforced many times to sell some book or other to buy his dinner with." In Wanley's Catalogue Hickes's title of Lauderdale MS. is preserved. The Duke of Lauderdale married into the family of Tollemache, and the present owner of the MS. is John Tollemache, Esq., of Helmingham Hall, Suffolk.

To his English version of the General History of Orosius Alfred joined a translation into the native tongue of what was incomparably the best history of his own country extant, the "Ecclesiastical History," which, as the reader has seen, is, in fact, also a general political history, of Bede. Orosius and Bede represent general history of the world about us, and the particular history of our own country. The translations were probably successive, but it is impossible to determine which was made first. We may place Alfred's work on them between the year 888 and the year 893, when there began a four years' contest against renewed invasions of the Danes that would have left to the king but little leisure for the pen. The king's name does not occur in the translation, and there is no introduction written by him. But Ælfric and William of Malmesbury both assign the translation to King Alfred; and the adoption of a mistranslation—*Maximus imperator creatus est*, the Emperor was born—shows that the compilers of the Saxon Chronicle, soon after the year 890, read Bede in this First-English version. In translating Bede, Alfred, as usual, regarded only his own purpose; and, as he wrote for his own people, he omitted details about the Church affairs of the Scots and the Church of York, documents also and letters of bishops and popes, but he did not omit a word from the history of the first Christian kings of Wessex. It is remarkable, however, and almost discredits his authorship of the translation, that he does not add a fact of his own fuller knowledge of the history of the West Saxons over whom he ruled, and of whom Bede, as a northern writer, had least knowledge. It has been suggested that Alfred did not attempt this in his translation of Bede because he had done it in his Manual. It has also been suggested by Professor Wülcker that Alfred may have relied for that part of his history upon the Saxon Chronicle, which he began to set on foot in the year 991.

Alfred's Bede.

Alfred's other translations were religious. Pope Gregory the Great was, in and before his day, a favourite writer; his influence indeed was considerable upon much early religious literature. At the beginning of his pontificate, when reproached with having wished to escape by flight from his election to the Papal see, he wrote the "Regula Pastoralis," collecting many things scattered in different places through his works, to show what the mind of a true spiritual pastor ought to be. The reformatory synods under Charlemagne adopted this book as the law of their proceedings for improvement of the ecclesiastical profession, and King Alfred translated it for England as Gregory's Book on the Care of the Soul. The translation was made at some time after the year 890, aided, the king says, not only by Asser, Grimbald, and John, but also by his Archbishop Plegmund, who did not become Archbishop of Canterbury until the year 890. Dr. Bosworth was disposed to place this translation after the date of the four years of renewed struggle with the Danes, in the years of peace closing the reign of Alfred, from 897 to the death of Alfred in October 901. Professor Wülcker, on the contrary, is disposed to place the "Cura Pastoralis" first in the series of Alfred's translations, because its preface is the king's preface to his whole design as a translator (but the explanatory preface to a work may be the last thing written); because he directly associates the work on the "Cura Pastoralis" by a "therefore" to the statement of his first design; because it was more useful to begin by reforming the teachers; because the Latin of the "Cura" is less difficult than that of Boëthius, and is less freely translated. This is the most literal of his translations; and it is in the preface to it that Alfred set forth the decay of learning in his kingdom, and his desire for its true restoration. Alfred, addressing Wærferd, Bishop of Worcester, recalled the happy times when kings obeyed God, preserved peace

Gregory's Book on the Care of the Soul.

at home and enlarged their territory abroad, when the clergy were active in their duties, and foreigners came to this land for the wisdom and instruction which his people would now have to look abroad for. He found very few south of the Humber who could understand their rituals or read a Latin letter, and he thought there were not many north of the Humber who knew better. South of the Thames—that is in Wessex—when he came to the throne, he knew not one. But now that there were some teachers again, let them diligently teach. Before all had been ravaged and burnt, churches throughout England stood filled with treasures and books, and there were also many clergy, but they had little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand them, because they were not written in their own language. It was as if they said, "Our forefathers loved wisdom, and through it bequeathed us wealth. We have not followed their example, and for lack of wisdom there is no more wealth." Alfred wondered, he said, why the wise men in their time did not translate the books into English, but they never thought that men should be so careless as to let learning decay. Then said Alfred, he remembered how the Law first known in Hebrew was by the Greeks translated into Greek, and by the Romans into Latin, and so he thought it good to translate into English those books which were most necessary to be known, and that all the free youth should, while they were too young for other occupation, be taught to read English writing, while those who were born to high rank might carry on their study into Latin. Few in his time could read Latin, and many could read English, wherefore he began, among the troubles of the kingdom, to translate into English the book called in Latin "Pastoralis," and in English, Shepherd's Book, as he had learnt it from Plegmond his archbishop, and Asser his bishop, and Gumbold and John his mass priests; "and to each bishop's see in my kingdom I will send one copy, and on each a tablet

worth fifty mancuses," * he said, "and I command in God's name that no man separate the tablets from the book or the book from the minster." The book might be taken out or lent only by the bishop, or for anyone to make a copy.† The preface is followed by a poetical introduction; and a metrical appendix to the book also agrees with the purport of the preface. At the request of Alfred, Werfrith, Bishop of Worcester, translated also an abridgment of the popular Dialogues of Gregory with his friend Deacon Peter, setting forth the legends of Italian saints, and giving its first shape to the doctrine of Purgatory

Gregory's Dialogues.

An Anglo-Saxon translation and abridgment of St. Augustine's Soliloquies, written before he was a great controversialist, in which Reason speaks to him as she spoke to Boëthius, and treats of salvation by faith, hope, charity, and striving after truth, is known as "The Anglo-Saxon Anthology," of which the only MS.,‡ torn and defective, ends with the words, "here end the sayings that King Alfred chose from the books which we call ——." There is no reference elsewhere to this

"The Anglo-Saxon Anthology."

* A mancus was six shillings.

† King Alfred's West Saxon version of Gregory's "Pastoral Care" has been edited by Mr. Henry Sweet for the "Early English Text Society," in two parts (1871-2). Mr. Sweet lays great stress on its philological value for the number of rare words it contains, and points to the care with which it had been used by Junius for the formation of his MS. dictionary in the Bodleian, from which later dictionary-makers borrowed largely, with too little acknowledgment. The MSS. of the "Cura Pastoralis" are: one of the end of the ninth century in the Bodleian (Hatton, 20); one in the Cotton library (Tiberius, B, xi.), also of Alfred's time, greatly destroyed by fire, but there is a copy of it in the Bodleian made by Junius; another in the Cotton collection, of the beginning of the tenth century, Otho, B, ii.; and three later MSS. at Cambridge in the University library and the libraries of Corpus Christi and Trinity.

‡ Bibl. Cotton. Vitellius, A, 15.

as one of Alfred's works; and the assertion of the copyist is doubted. Professor Wülcker, however, gives very good reason for paying full attention to this work, and is right, I think, in ascribing it to Alfred. The only MS. of it is as late as the twelfth century, imperfect and corrupt, but its treatment of the two books of St. Augustine's Soliloquies is in Alfred's manner and in Alfred's vocabulary; and of the two MSS. in which alone we have his translation of Boëthius, one is of the twelfth century and in English equally transformed. The additions to Augustine's text are hardly such as would have been made by a monk, and what layman was there except Alfred to whom they could be ascribed? There is an original introduction. The first book is a pretty close translation; the second book is in free paraphrase; and as third book there is added a selection of thoughts from Augustine's "De Videndo Deo." In the last chapter of his version of Boëthius Alfred urged that we should use the reason God gave us to bring us nearer to the knowledge of Him. Professor Wülcker argues * that Alfred passed on, towards the close of his life, from Boëthius to Augustine, from Philosophy to God, throwing his reproductions of Augustine into the form suggested by his work upon Boëthius. Thus there is in his introduction to the book which led men to the sight of God a little parable of the wood from which he and his friends had brought the fairest trees and branches they could bear away; referring to the forest of sound literature in which his last tree had been felled, and in which many remained that might be sought by those who should come after him, wherewith to build walls of defence and homes for shelter from the heat and from the storm. Although it may not have been immediately

* Paul and Braune's "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Litteratur," vol. iv., pp. 101—131. "Grundriss zur Geschichte der A.-S. Litt.," pp. 416—420.

preceded by the version of Boëthius, this may very well have been the last writing of Alfred before he himself passed to the full sight of God.

Many works not Alfred's were ascribed to him; among them a book of proverbs, of which Alfred is the hero, setting forth how at Seaford, at an assembly of bishops, scholars, earls, and knights, King Alfred, the Shepherd and Darling of England, presided, and uttered in detached sentences a series of proverbial admonitions, which are given, each with the prefix of "Thus sayeth Alfred." In the thirtieth section he addresses proverbs to his son, who is not named. The book probably belongs to the twelfth century, and was popular during the Middle Ages, not only in England, but also in other Germanic countries. There were ascribed to him also translations of the Parables and of the Fables of Æsop; and there is an unsubstantial late tradition that he wrote a treatise upon Hawking, founded probably on Asser's statement that he took pains to establish and support falconers and fowlers of all kinds.

Proverbs, &c.

With somewhat more probability has been ascribed to King Alfred and his counsellor Plegmund the substantial development of that record of national history known as the Saxon or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. There are several MSS. of the Chronicle. The earliest * ends with the year 855; is in the handwriting of the ninth century; and may be the original from which entries were supplied to monasteries in which expert scribes made free copies of the record. The narrative becomes full after the year 853, or soon after the date of Alfred's birth. It is also stated in the old French chronicle of Geoffrey Gaimar, written in the twelfth century, that King Alfred had at Winchester a copy of a chronicle fastened by

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

* In Corpus Christi Coll. Cam., S, xi. See note on p. 308.

a chain, so that all who wished might read. The history is best told during the years from the election of Plegmund as archbishop in 890 to his death in 922.

The Chronicle, which begins, after a brief account of Britain, with Cæsar's invasion, was continued to the accession of Henry II., in the year 1154, and shares with Bede's History the first place among authorities for early English history. The extant copies are all evidently based upon a single text; but there is no record of the source of this. It has only been conjectured that from monasteries in different parts of England local annals were sent to the monastic head-quarters of a national historiographer, who at the end of each year compiled a short summary of its history. Of the text of this summary copies may then have been made by his brethren for distribution among other religious houses; and thus every possessor of the Chronicle might add to it year by year, with local changes of form, each year's instalment of the story of the nation. The chronicler at times borrowed the harp of the scóp and celebrated some passage of history in verse. Of the verses in the Saxon Chronicle we shall speak when discussing the last poems of the days before the Norman Conquest. Interpolations occur, especially in one of the latest and most careless of the seven extant copies;* but as a rule, from Alfred's time downwards, the entries are contemporary; although it is not until some time after the Conquest that they begin to show any variations in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. The later entries, however, very strongly indicate the breaking up of the pure Anglo-Saxon.†

* Bibl. Cotton. Domitian, A, viii. 2, written almost wholly in the middle of the twelfth century.

† The texts of all the MSS. are given entire in the edition of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle published in the series of Chronicles and Memorials published under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, according to the several

King Alfred died on the 28th of October, 901, at the age of fifty-three, after a reign of twenty-nine years and six months.*

The authenticity of Bishop Asser's Life of Alfred has been altogether denied by Thomas Wright,† and chiefly

original authorities. Edited with a Translation by Benjamin Thorpe. Vol. I. Original Texts. Vol. II. Translation" (London, 1861). This is now the standard edition. The Chronicle was first published at Cambridge, in folio, from collation of two MSS. in Anglo-Saxon, with a Latin translation by Abraham Wheloc, in 1644. It was next edited in 1692, at Oxford, by Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, from collation with three other MSS., and with a new Latin translation, preface, notes, and indexes. In 1823 the Rev. James Ingram, B.D., afterwards President of Trin. Coll., Oxford, published a text enlarged by collation of all the known MSS., with an English translation, preface, notes, indexes, and brief grammar of Anglo-Saxon. An edition of the Chronicle down to the Norman Conquest, with an English translation, by Richard Price, was published in folio by royal authority, in 1848, among the Monumenta Historica Britannica. Of the MSS., the oldest, already cited, is at Cambridge; one that belonged formerly to Peterborough is in the Bodleian (Laud, 636), and the rest are all among the Cotton MSS. of the British Museum (Tib. A, vi., Tib. B, i., Tib. B, iv., Tib. A, iii.—a single leaf, Dom. A, viii. 2, and Otho B, xi. 2).

* The life of King Alfred should be read by help of his German biographer, Dr. Reinhold Pauli, whose book has been twice translated into English. There is "The Life of King Alfred, by Dr. Reinhold Pauli. A Translation revised by the author. Edited by Thomas Wright" (London, 1852); and there is, as a volume of Bohn's Antiquarian Library, "The Life of Alfred the Great, Translated from the German of Dr. R. Pauli. To which is appended Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of Orosius, with a literal English Translation, and an Anglo-Saxon Alphabet and Glossary, by B. Thorpe" (London, 1853). This cheap volume is valuable to the student, because it not only contains, with a translation, the Anglo-Saxon text of Alfred's Orosius, but it has the now rare merit of giving the text in the old letters, with which it is desirable to became familiar. There is also a digest of Anglo-Saxon grammar and a glossary, so that the whole forms a very useful text-book for the learner.

† "Biog. Brit. Lit.," pp. 405—412.

upon the following grounds: that his account of himself and of the manner of his coming to Alfred's court is improbable; that the writing of such a work by Asser in the vigour of the king's lifetime—when he was in his forty-fifth year—appears strange; that internal evidence shows the book to be a compound of history and legend. The Life consists of two parts: 1, an historical chronicle from 851 to 887, corresponding with the Saxon Chronicle for those years; which probably, said Wright, was not in existence till long after Alfred's death; 2, a few personal anecdotes of Alfred grafted on the Chronicle at the years 866 and 884, but without particular reference to them, at the conclusion. The chronological entries cease at the year 887, although the author says that he was writing in 893. The interpolated stories it is argued, are legends that could not have been written in Alfred's time. There are inconsistencies. In one part Alfred is said to have been cured of his painful disease by prayer to St. Neot, at the age of forty; in a later page it is said that he continued to be subject to it in his forty-fifth year, at the time of writing. It is further argued that there has been evident use of a Life of St. Neot, which there is reason for believing was not written until 974. Another work, compiled from the Saxon Chronicle, is called the Chronicle of St. Neot's, which has also been called Asser's Annals; this work and the Life of Alfred were, Thomas Wright thought, both written by a monk of St. Neot's about the end of the tenth century. By this later writer he believed that the Life of Alfred was constructed out of current tradition, the Saxon Chronicle, and legends in the Life of St. Neot. The St. Neot mentioned in this argument was a kinsman of King Alfred's, who, first bred to arms, renounced the world, taught at Glastonbury, visited Rome, and desiring pious solitude became a hermit in the woods of Cornwall. After seven years he visited the Pope again,

Asser's Life of Alfred.

returned to his hermitage, converted it into a small monastic house, of which he was the first abbot, where also he is said to have been sometimes visited by Alfred, and died in 877. In 974 his bones were carried to the newly-founded monastery of St. Neot's, Huntingdonshire, and after that date his Life was written.

Dr. Pauli represented the best form of more prevalent opinion in arguing that the Life we have is Asser's work, with interpolations. There is no good MS. of Asser's Life of Alfred; the most ancient, which was of the tenth century, was burnt in the fire at the Cotton Library.* But nine years before that fire, which occurred in 1731, Wise's edition of Asser was published with collations of the original. From this, Dr. Pauli argued, we learn that the early MS. did not contain those passages, found in the others, which have been most strongly suspected. These have been taken from the St. Neot's Chronicle or Annals of Asser, a bad compilation from the Saxon Chronicle, joined to legends totally at variance with history. Such additions, it is observed, found their way into the MS., which was completed very late in the sixteenth century, and by neglect or design was admitted into Archbishop Parker's edition of 1574. Thus it is that the contents of the edition of the tenth century are known to us only from the criticism of Francis Wise.

Again, argues Dr. Pauli, it is known that Florence of Worcester introduced the larger part of Asser's biography into his Chronicle. The Chronicle agrees with the

* "E. W." I. 276 *n.* The Cotton Library was secured to the nation by an Act of Parliament in 1700. Queen Anne bought Cotton House, Westminster, in 1706, for the Royal and Cotton Libraries. House and Library were vested in trustees. The Library was removed in 1712 to Essex House, Essex Street, Strand; and in 1730 to Little Dean's Yard, where the fire occurred on the 23rd of October in the following year.

biography word for word—Asser not being once mentioned as the authority. Did Florence entirely follow Asser, or in the annalistic part did he and Asser both follow the Saxon Chronicle? Asser, when writing the life of the king in 893, could consult the Chronicles as far as the year 890; his annalistic part extends, in fact, to the year 887. Dr. Pauli then points out that of the biographical details in Asser, which are episodes of various lengths and imperfect in many places, there are some which Florence repeats partly word for word, omitting the introductory phrases and now and then shortening his text towards the end. Thus are to be found repeated, as parts of the original biography, the relation of Alfred's descent; of his youth and desire for learning; his marriage; his bodily infirmities and family; detail of the learned men at his court; Asser's own position with the king; Alfred's studies, illness, cares of state, religious foundations, love of justice. But there are not to be found the later legends, of Alfred's ship-building in 877, of his residence with the cowherd at Athelney, and, of course, there is nothing about the origin of the University of Oxford. Dr. Pauli adds to his argument, of which I have given only the main points, that the frequently-recurring addition of the Celtic names of different places to the Saxon and Latin names* makes it evident that a Briton—and who else could it be but Asser of Wales?—wrote the original work.

We must not pass out of the ninth century, which saw in its first years the death of Haroun al Raschid in 809, and of Charlemagne in 814, and closed with the last years of Alfred the Great, who died in 901, without a glance at Otfried. The "Heliand," as we have seen, was a Saxon work

* Asser, with readers at St. David's in his mind, writes, "Thornsaetas were called Durngueis," "Eaxanceastre was called Cairwise," "Selwudu, silvamagna, Coit maur," &c.

of the ninth century, in which use was made of a Commentary on Matthew's Gospel, written by Hrabanus Maurus in the ninth century.* Hrabanus Maurus was fifth abbot of the monastery of Fulda in Hessen Cassel; he became Archbishop of Mainz, and established at the beginning of the ninth century the pre-eminence of the school at Fulda throughout Germany. About the year 860, when Fulda made nearer approach than any other place to the conception of a university, Otfried, a monk and priest of the monastery of Weissenburg, in Bavaria, produced in German verse what he himself called "Liber Evangeliorum Theotisce Conscriptus," which is of high interest in the history of literature. He had studied at Fulda, under Hrabanus, and he also used his teacher's Commentary on Matthew, Bede's on Luke, and Alcuin's on John, in shaping his own poem on the Gospels. His "Harmony of the Gospels" was an original work in two-lined strophes, with freedom in the use of his material, and addition of Doomsday at the close. The first and last parts were written before the middle, the whole was divided into five books with subdivision into chapters, and then dedicated in acrostic verse to King Louis of Bavaria, and sent with a Latin introduction to his metropolitan, Lindbert, Archbishop of Mainz. The poem is didactic, taking sometimes lyric form by use of a refrain, and by use of rhyme variously arranged in strophe form. Otfried, who says that he meant his songs to supersede the useless songs then current among the people, may have acquired his use of rhyme from familiarity with the rhymed Latin verses written by the Churchmen, and there may have been rhyme mixed with alliteration in some of those songs of the people that he wished to supersede. However that may be, Otfried's "Liber Evangeliorum," written in Bavaria when Alfred had not yet become king, represents a longer step towards the use of rhyme in the vernacular than had

* "E. W." II. 101.

been made at that time by any of the English poets. For German poetry, in fact, it opened a new chapter in the history of verse.*

Another writer who lived in the ninth century among the Teutons of the continent, and whose work has relation to a form of literature that will hereafter become familiar in Europe, is an anonymous poet, known as Poeta Saxo, because his Latin poem in one or two passages shows him to have been a Saxon. A monk of St. Gall about the year 883 was collecting from oral tradition anecdotes of Charlemagne. The Saxon poet's book, written between the years 888 and 891, made the first advance towards the distinct establishment of Charlemagne as a hero of poetical romance. Its title is "Annales de Gestis Caroli Magni," and it is in five books, of which four are in hexameters, the fifth in distichs. The first, second, and third books follow closely, but with poetical treatment, Eginhard's "Annals of Charlemagne." In the fourth book use has been made of other Annals. The fifth book laments the death of Charlemagne, and rejoices in his life with Christ. He made the Saxons Christians, and by so doing, how many were the souls he brought to God! To him the poet, as a Saxon, himself owes his hope of everlasting life. Trouble came after the great king's death. His land was laid waste by the Northmen. There had arisen hope, the poet said, of better days, but a great ruin which has long been falling is not suddenly restored.† And so men found in England after Alfred's death.

* See, for example, "Die Accente in Otfrieds Evangelienbuch. Eine Metrische Untersuchung, von Naphtali Sobel," in "Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Cultur-Geschichte der Germanischen Völker" [1882]. Among Coleridge's poems is translation of a piece of Otfried.

† Sed moles immensa, diu quæ corruit ante,
Non restaurari se subito patitur.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TENTH CENTURY: MONASTICISM.

CHARLEMAGNE'S effort to inform with knowledge the rough vigour of an untamed people was more hopeful than that of Alfred, when he laboured to restore a scholarship already fallen to decay. But after all, the chief labour of Alfred was not so much to restore as to distribute. There was an end of the feast of learning. The wild Northmen had broken up the tables and dispersed the company; but there remained the meats on which they had been feasting, and the most substantial of these Alfred, having gathered them up, was diligent in labour to divide among his people. To this end tended his work as a translator of good knowledge out of Latin into the common tongue, and if he could do little towards the restoration of a lettered Church, he did much towards the formation of a more instructed laity. There was after Alfred's time more breadth of culture in the sturdy and right-minded race that not long afterwards looked back to him as England's Darling, though the days were gone that had produced an Anglo-Saxon Cædmon. Public intelligence advanced, while from causes within itself the Church as an exponent of the nation's mind lost power.

Knowledge abroad.

For whatever hope there might have been of a recovery of the old free intellectual energy within the Church was soon destroyed by the predominant energy of Dunstan, who with his friend Ethelwold—a man of his own age and a firm fellow-labourer—gave Church reform a fatal twist towards the narrowest monasticism of the Benedictine Rule.

Ethelwold, who has been called the Father of Monks, was born in the reign of Edward the Elder; therefore, not later than the year 925. He was a favourite of King Athelstane, and was ordained priest at the same time as Dunstan. When Dunstan, A.D. 947, became at the age of two-and-twenty Abbot of Glastonbury, Ethelwold became a monk in his establishment. Afterwards, to prevent Ethelwold from carrying his zeal and learning into France, the small ruined abbey of Abingdon was given to him, with lands and gifts for its re-establishment. The new abbey was completed in the year 950, and three years afterwards its abbot was consecrated Bishop of Winchester by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. Ethelwold then turned out of the monasteries the secular priests, who, like the English clergy of the present day, lived under no rule of celibacy, and introduced into their place monks from Glastonbury and Abingdon, then the sole centres of the strict monastic rule. He was the zealous establisher of a nipping monasticism, and a great builder of churches. He bought and rebuilt the ruins of Medeshamstead, since called Peterborough, Thorney and Ely Nunnery, and he rebuilt Winchester Cathedral, which was then consecrated by Dunstan to St. Swithun in the presence of King Ethelred and of nine bishops.

Nipping Monasticism. Ethelwold.

Translation of the bones of saints, and the ascribing of miracles to their shrines, were at this time means vigorously used for uniting the people strongly to the Church. Legendary histories of saints became common, and there has lately been published an interesting Anglo-Saxon fragment of a string of legends, setting forth why Ethelwold, having translated the bones of Swithun, dedicated to him the new minster, which remained dedicated to that saint until Henry VIII. ordered the name of the Holy Trinity to be substituted. Used as waste parchment, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in binding a

Legends of Swithun.

Register for the Chapter Library at Gloucester, six leaves of tenth century manuscript were set aside more than thirty years ago by a minor canon and a librarian, to be shown to Mr. Sharon Turner when he came, as he did once a year, that way. They were pronounced by him to be portions of an Anglo-Saxon homily or homilies. The leaves were put aside and lost for a time, but rediscovered as loose leaves in a thin portfolio when in 1860 the British Association met at Gloucester. They were then examined and described by the Rev. John Earle, Oxford Professor of Anglo-Saxon, and edited by him next year for publication, both in facsimile as photo-zincographs, and with the text printed in modern letters; translated literally, annotated, and provided with an essay on St. Swithun. Three of the six leaves refer to the story of St. Maria Egyptiaca, and do not especially concern this narrative; the other three are two fragments of the legends that were officially collected by the bishop, with his secretary sitting by, even the learned Landferth, from over the sea, who wrote it down in Latin.*

When a full case had been made out by evidence of miracles it was laid before the fortunate King Edgar, who ordered that the translation should take place with proper pomp; and Swithun, who had been more than a century earlier Ethelwold's predecessor as Bishop of Winchester between the years 852 and 862, was removed from the burial-place he had chosen for himself on the north side of his old church of Peter and Paul, in the ground between that and the fine wooden belfry he had built. Matthew of Westmin-

* "Gloucester Fragments. 1. Facsimile of some Leaves in Saxon Handwriting on Saint Swithun, copied by Photozincography at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, and published with Elucidations and an Essay by John Earle, M.A., Rector of Swanswick, late Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College, and Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Oxford" (London, 1861).

ster says that Bishop Swithun "ordered his household that they should inter his corpse outside the church, where the feet of passengers and the droppings from the eaves would beat upon it." But when the translation was desired by Ethelwold, the saint—as the newly-published Anglo-Saxon fragment tells us—appeared in a dream to a decrepit old smith and bade him go to a priest of Swithun's kin, named Eádsige, who had been ejected with others from Oldminster by Bishop Ethelwold, and was then settled at Winchilcombe. The smith was to bid Eádsige go to Bishop Ethelwold, asking that he would himself open Swithun's burial-place, and bring his bones to the new church. The smith, it is said, being unwilling to act on the prompting of a dream, was thrice exhorted, and told that for a sign the iron ring in the stone over Swithun's tomb would be found to give way at the first tug. The smith tried the ring timidly, and it came out of the stone as if the stone were sand. He put it back, trod it down, and it held tight again. Eádsige, who had until then shunned Ethelwold and his monks, returned within two years to the minster, and remained in it until his death. A hump-backed man lost at the holy grave his hump. A sick man, carried to the burial-place, watched there till near dawn. "Then he fell asleep, and the worshipful tomb, as seemed to them all, was all rocking. And to the sick man it seemed as if one of his shoes were being tugged from off his foot. And he suddenly awoke. He was then healed through the holy Swithun. And they sought the shoe very diligently; but no man was able to find it there ever." The sick were healed at the rate of from three to eighteen a day. It was not easy to get into the minster for the press of diseased people in the burial-ground. Three blind women came from the Isle of Wight, with a dumb boy for guide. The women and the boy were healed. "The old church was all hung around with crutches and with cripples' stools from

one end to the other, on either wall, of them that were healed; they could not, however, even so put up half of them . . . and we say, in sooth, that the time was happy and winsome in Angle-cyn, then when King Edgar furthered Christendom and many monasteries were raised, and his kingdom was dwelling in peace." Of this sort was the case presented to the king in favour of translation, and to the people in favour of worship, within Ethelwold's newly-built church. It may be observed, in the passage just quoted out of the "Gloucester Fragments," that Edgar's people, West-Saxons, are called Angle-cyn, Angles; at the same time the four western counties of Cornwall, Devon, much of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire, unwillingly dependent upon Wessex, were the Wealh-cyn (Stranger-race), or Welsh of the West—the country across the Severn being said to belong to the North Wealh-cyn or North Welsh.

Ethelwold had also a mechanical turn, which he applied, of course, with all his other powers to the main purpose of his life. He made "a certain wheel full of bells, which he called the golden wheel, on account of its being plated with gold. This he directed to be brought forward and turned round on feast days, to excite greater devotion." * A treatise of Ethelwold's is extant upon the squaring of the circle,† and in accordance with his chief and constant labour he translated into First-English St. Benedict's "Rule of a Monastic Life." ‡ The Saxon Chronicle calls Ethelwold "the benevolent bishop." When there were famine and pestilence in his diocese he caused the sacred vessels of

* Regist. Abendon. in the Monasticon, here quoted through Thomas Wright's "Biog. Brit. Lit.," a work from which I take information about several minor writers.

† Bodl. MS. Digby, No. 83, fol. 24.

‡ A copy is in MS. Cotton. Faustina, A, x. A compilation from it made by Aelfric for the monks of Eynesham is among the MSS. of Corpus Christi Coll. Cambridge, No. 265.

his church to be broken up to feed the poor. He also made Winchester famous as a place of instruction, by the eager pleasure with which he was said to teach, and his good sense in reading to the pupils in their own tongue Latin books of information. Ethelwold died in the year 984, with his friend Dunstan sitting by his bed.

Dunstan, nephew of Athelm Archbishop of Canterbury, and of Alfheh Bishop of Winchester, was born near Glastonbury in the year 925. He was taught at Glastonbury, received the tonsure there, and afterwards was presented at Canterbury, by his uncle Athelm, to King Athelstane. He lived for a time at court, where he made friends and found enemies. He retired—a young man of eighteen or nineteen—to the house of the uncle who was Bishop of Winchester; fell passionately in love, and wished to marry; was opposed by exhortations to celibacy; took fever, and was told that the fever was a judgment on his passions; recovered, and shut himself up in a cell by the wall of Winchester Church, half sunk below the ground and hardly high enough to suffer him to stand upright. There he employed himself with study; wrote, illuminated; exercised his taste for mechanics, and worked at a little forge on metal work and vessels of the church. It was with the tongs used by young Dunstan at this forge that he is said to have taken the Devil by the nose and made him howl, so that he was heard for miles around. Probably Dunstan's belief in his temptations by the fiends, and his imagination of assaults of fiends in the assaults of curs upon the highway, belonged to an insane side of his character. He soon had credit as a saint. Pilgrimages were made to the youth's cell. A rich widow settled down before it; when she died she left him all her property. While yet a youth Dunstan was called from his cell to be one of King Edmund's counsellors. Edmund then made him Abbot of Glastonbury, and at once Dunstan went the

Dunstan.

way on which he was followed by his friend Ethelwold. He turned out all married clergy, or clergy who desired to marry, and introduced the austerest discipline of Benedict's own, now four century old, Monte Cassino.

Dunstan was regarded by the later Anglo-Saxons as first abbot of true monks, and as founder at Glastonbury of the first truly monastic school. He still had his delusions as to persecution by the demons. After the accession of Edwy, whose fair wife Dunstan insulted and the revengeful Church afterwards seared and hamstrung, the monks were turned out and the secular clergy reinstated. Dunstan retired to the monastery—where Adelard, who afterwards wrote an extant eulogy of him,* was a monk—of St. Peter's at Ghent; but he was recalled by Edgar, then a boy of fourteen, upon the partition of the kingdom, and made Bishop of Worcester; also of London; afterwards—at the age of thirty-four—Edgar's principal minister; and, in 962, Archbishop of Canterbury at the age of thirty-eight, holding, together with the primacy, the two bishoprics of London and Rochester, and getting Winchester for his friend Ethelwold. Dunstan died at the age of sixty-four in the year 988. A Bodleian MS.† contains a picture of Dunstan on his knees worshipping Christ, with a scroll of prayer issuing from his mouth, and of this picture a very ancient note says that it was the work of Dunstan himself. He wrote, for the use of English monks, a modification of the Benedictine Rule, with a First-English interlinear version,‡ and also a large commentary on the Benedictine Rule,§ probably containing the substance of the lectures on the Rule delivered in the early monastic schools of Glastonbury, Abingdon, and their offshoots.

* Bibl. Cotton. Nero, C, vii.

† NE. D, 2, 19.

‡ A MS. of it is in the Cotton Collection, Tiberius, A, iii.

§ MS. Reg. 10, A, xiii.

Lantfred, one of the pupils of Ethelwold at Winchester, wrote an inflated book of Latin prose on the "Posthumous Miracles of St. Swithun."* His fellow-pupil Wulfstan turned that book into Latin verse, and wrote also an extant Life of his master Ethelwold. Lantfred. Wulfstan Cantor. Of Wulfstan's verse there remain only fragments, except a dedication in 164 distichs to his bishop, Ælfeah. The bishop is praised for the spirit with which he carried on the building works at Winchester Cathedral, for the labyrinth of secret crypts, for the great organ, on which he expatiates, and for the great tower with five windows, surmounted by a gilt cock with a sceptre in its claws. Wulfstan celebrates the stately consecration of the church in which eight bishops were engaged; he celebrates the holy men there buried, Swithun and Ethelwold, with whom Ælfeah, who so well follows in their steps, will hereafter be joined. This Wulfstan, called Cantor, was a singer at Winchester, and William of Malmesbury says that he wrote also a practical work "On the Harmony of Tones."

Fabius Ethelwerd, the patrician, a descendant of King Ethelred, wrote a short Latin Chronicle, from the beginning of the world to the year 975, dedicated, in its introduction, to his relative Matilda, daughter of Emperor Otho, a "dearest sister, whose letter has been longed for and read with kisses." Matilda was daughter of an Editha, the sister of King Athelstane. In his introduction Ethelwerd both gives and requests information upon royal descents and intermarriages. The Chronicle is very bald and in bad Latin, consisting usually of little more than memoranda, but comparatively full in treatment of the reigns of Ethelred and Alfred. Ethelwerd.

* In the Brit. Mus. MS., Reg. 15, C, vii., which contains also Wulfstan's metrical version.

Bridferth. Bridferth, a mathematical monk, alive in 980, commented on Bede's scientific text-books, and wrote also a Life of Dunstan.*

The Saxon Chronicle, which probably had its origin before King Alfred's time, in Annals of Winchester, was continued during the tenth century.†

* Bibl. Cotton. Cleop. B, xiii.

† Of the seven MSS. of the Saxon Chronicle, one, A, that belonged to Christ Church, Canterbury, came into the possession of Queen Elizabeth's archbishop, Matthew Parker, who did all he could for the establishment of Anglo-Saxon studies. The MS. is now in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. It may have been written for Winchester, as it names all the bishops there within the years 634—674. It also omits the earliest part compiled from Bede, and pays much attention between the years 455—634 to the history of Wessex. The death of King Cynewulf, which took place in 783, has been inserted by error under the year 755. After 855 there is a genealogy of King Ethelwulf, who died in 857, and this ends with "Amen." Professor Earle thinks that about the year 855 the section including the years 455—855 was written perhaps for Swithun. This MS. was continued in different hands, ends at the year 1001, and contains interpolations in a handwriting of the twelfth century.

MS. B of the Saxon Chronicle belonged to the monastery of St. Augustine in Canterbury, and is now in the British Museum (Cotton. Tiberius, A, vi.). It is in a handwriting of the eleventh century to the year 977.

C (Cotton. Tiberius, B, i.). From the monastery of Abingdon in Berkshire. It is in one handwriting as far as the year 1046. Then follow 1046—1056, and then 1065—1066, with an account of the battle of Stamford Bridge, which seems to have been written by an eye-witness.

D (Cotton. Tiberius, B, iv.). From Worcester; written in one hand to the year 1016; then continued in several handwritings to 1079.

E, of Peterborough, has the longest record, for it extends to 1154. It is in one handwriting to the year 1121, and was probably begun after the burning of the abbey at Peterborough in 1116. Its chief value is for the years 1066—1154.

F (Cotton. Domitian, A, viii.). This is in one handwriting to the year 1058.

G (Cotton. Otho, B, xi.), from Canterbury, reaches to the year

A fragment of a Martyrology * exists in four MSS., of which one, written on two leaves, was shown by Mr. Cockayne, who called attention to it, to have been written in King Alfred's time.

1001. It was partly destroyed by the fire in the Cotton Library, but had been printed by Abraham Wheloc, the first Anglo-Saxon lecturer in the University of Cambridge. In 1640, Sir Henry Spelman, being eighty years old and within a year or two of his death, appropriated part of his own annual income and the vicarage of Middleton, in the diocese of Norwich, augmented by himself, as a stipend either for the reading of Anglo-Saxon lectures or for the publication of Anglo-Saxon MSS. Wheloc preferred private study.

* Printed by the Rev. T. Oswald Cockayne in his "Shrine; a Collection of Occasional Papers on Dry Subjects" (13 numbers, from 1864 to 1869).

CHAPTER XIV.

TO THE END OF THE TENTH CENTURY.

ÆLFRIC was one of the first pupils in the monastic school of Ethelwold at Abingdon. He was born about the year 955, for he was priest in 987. When Ethelwold became Bishop of Winchester Ælfric went with him, and was his chief helper in establishing the fame of Winchester as a place of instruction. Ælfric, acting as chief minister of instruction in Ethelwold's diocese, wrote as a school-book his Latin Colloquies and a glossary in Latin and First-English that was printed at Oxford in the year 1659. After Ethelwold's death Ælfric, still at Winchester, was employed by Ethelwold's successor, Ælfeah. About the year 987 he was removed to the abbey of Cerne in Dorsetshire, by the wish of its founder Ethelmer, at the request of whose son Ethelward, Ælfric compiled his Homilies, apparently between the years 989 and 991. At Ethelward's request also he began to translate Genesis into Anglo-Saxon, and continued until he had completed the whole Pentateuch and book of Job. He wrote also a Latin and First-English Grammar, two letters upon the Old and New Testament, and a Liturgy. About the year 1005 Ælfric became abbot of an abbey of Eynsham (now Ensham) near Oxford, founded, like Cerne, by Ethelmer, who himself withdrew into it. And 1006 was the year of the death of Ælfric Archbishop of Canterbury, with whom the Ælfric of literature was, by mistake, formerly identified.

Ælfric.

Abbot Ælfric wrote a Life of Ethelwold, which he dedicated to Bishop Kranulf of Winchester, who was not made bishop until the year of the death of Ælfric the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Ælfric's Colloquy.

Ælfric's Colloquy is best known, as it was afterwards enlarged and republished by Ælfric Bata, who had been himself taught Latin by it at Winchester.* Latin, being a spoken and written language in living use among the learned, though the study of it had then much decayed in England, was taught conversationally, as now the modern languages are taught; and the form of dialogue was used for Latin school-books in order that some conversational power might be acquired more readily by the pupil. The plan of Ælfric's Colloquy is, by making the disciple, who begs to be taught, answer questions on his own occupation and the various trades of his companions, to introduce into a not very long lesson-book the Latin for the greatest possible number of words applicable to the different pursuits of common life. The short descriptions incidentally illustrate manners of the day, and among these the use of the rod to the pupil, whether it were to make him a good scholar or to fetch him out of bed for nocturns, has not been overlooked. As the Latin words have their meanings interlined in Anglo-Saxon, some First-English words are interpreted by help of this Colloquy.

Ælfric's Grammar and Vocabulary.

Ælfric's Vocabulary, or Glossary, is the oldest Latin-English dictionary in existence. It is classified, not alphabetical: giving the Latin and Anglo-Saxon for farm-instruments; for ranks of men; for names of insects, birds, herbs, trees; names of drinking-vessels; kinds of drink, of clothing, of arms; of forms of boat or ship; of the winds; of colours, &c. The

* The MSS. of it are in the Cotton Collection (Tiberius, A, iii., ol. 58), and in the Library of St. John's College, Oxford.

classification, however, is but imperfectly preserved. This glossary was usually appended to Ælfric's First-English translation from the Latin Grammars of Priscian and of Donatus, that teacher of St. Jerome who was the Lindley Murray of the mediæval schools. The Grammar was preceded by a Latin and a First-English preface, in which Ælfric complained of the low state of learning in England before its revival by Dunstan and Ethelwold.

Ælfric's Homilies.

Ælfric's Homilies are compiled and translated from the Fathers, being a harmony of their opinions as the Anglo-Saxon Church accepted them, arranged, as to each topic, in the form of a separate and complete discourse, for the assurance of faith. They are in two sets, each of forty sermons; the first set was completed in the year 990, and published by the authority of Sigeric, then Archbishop of Canterbury; the second, compiled at the suggestion of Ethelward, commemorates the different saints revered by the Anglo-Saxon Church.* That on St. Gregory's Day was translated for Queen Anne by Elizabeth Elstob, an Anglo-Saxon scholar, who died in 1756. Its speciality is that it contains an account of the conversion of England. Elizabeth Elstob proposed to print, with translations, Ælfric's Homilies, and actually printed in folio thirty-six pages, when the press was stopped by want of funds. One of the sermons of Ælfric, that upon Easter, from the Latin of Ratramnus, attracted great attention, more than six centuries later, during the controversy with the Church of Rome, by the opposition of its doctrine of the Sacrament to the Roman theory of Transubstantiation. It was then several times reprinted as "A Testimonie of Antiquitie showing the Auncient fayth in

* See "The Homilies of Ælfric, with an English Translation, by Benjamin Thorpe." Printed for the Ælfric Society, in two volumes, 1843 and 1846.

the Church of England touching the sacrament of the body and bloude of the Lord here publikely preached, and also receaved in the Saxon tyme, above 600 yeares ago;" and the text from Jeremiah was added (vi. 16), "Goe into the streetes, and inquyre for the olde way; and if it be the good and ryght way, then goe therein, that ye may find rest for your soules. But they say: we will not walke therein." *

Ælfric wrote also a treatise concerning the Old and the New Testament, a treatise on the Trinity, a translation of Sigewulf's "Interrogationes in Genesin," an abridgment of Ethelwold's "Constitutions for the Monks of Eynsham," and at Eynsham perhaps two sermons, one to the clergy—Sermo ad Sacerdotes—and one to the people; also a treatise on the Celibate addressed to Sigefyrth, and his Latin Life of Ethelwold. Ælfric appears to have died at Eynsham soon after the year 1020.

Other works of Ælfric.

Ælfric's works, written for the instruction of the people, were adapted to oral delivery by use in his prose of alliteration and a rhythm somewhat allied to the rhythm of First-English verse. Delivery to the ear seems still to have been by a half musical recitative. The style is not that of the prose translations by King Alfred, because Alfred had no thought in his mind of the intoning of the "Consolation of Philosophy" to a large audience. Ælfric's Lives of Saints, designed in sermons for all saints' days of the English Church,† are, except the first on the Nativity of Christ, and

* No date. A later tract, published at Aberdeen in 1625, gives "Three Rare Monuments of Antiquitie, Bertram, Priest, a Frenchman (written 800 years ago); Ælfricus, Archbishop of Canterburie, an Englishman (preached 627 years ago); and Maurus, Abbot, a Scotsman (820 years ago). Translated and compacted by M. William Guild." I abridge its title.

† First edited by the Rev. Professor Skeat among the publications of the Early English Text Society, in two parts (1881—1885). Mr. Skeat observes that the Homilies of Ælfric, edited by Benjamin Thorpe for

the last on the Seven Sleepers, actually marked for rhythmical delivery by division into lines convenient for recitation. They are not poems, but they bring into the Church a form of story telling, applied to the lives of saints, that had been applied to deeds of heroes in the mead hall.

The Blickling Homilies.

The Marquis of Lothian has a country seat at Blickling Hall, by Aylsham, in Norfolk. In that house is a MS. written in the year 971 (as a passage in it shows) containing sermons by an unknown preacher, in which the language is not advanced like that of Ælfric in the direction of less archaic forms of construction, and the author is not an artist, as Ælfric was, in his work for advancement of the spiritual life of England. Ælfric's, indeed, is the last great name in the story of our literature before the Conquest.*

Be Domes Dæge.

The theme of Doomsday, that had so large a place in First-English religious poetry, was treated also in a tenth century translation of a Latin poem, "De Die Judicii," ascribed sometimes to Bede, sometimes to Alcuin. There is a single MS. of this translation, which is in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.†

Poem on the Battle of Brunanburh.

To the tenth century belong also a few remaining strains of native Anglo-Saxon poetry. In the Saxon Chronicle, under the date 937, prose record for the first time gives place to verse in chronicling the famous battle fought at Brunanburh in Northum-

the Ælfric Society, in two volumes (1844, 1846), seemed by their title of "First Part" of the "Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church" to be associated with a plan, not carried out, for publication also of these Sermons on the Lives of Saints, of which the best MS. is in the Cotton Collection, Julius, E, vii.

* The Blickling Homilies were edited for the Early English Text Society by the Rev. Dr. R. Morris, in three parts (1874, 1876, 1880).

† "Be Domes Dæge," with poetical paraphrases of the Lord's Prayer and the Doxology, was edited for the Early English Text Society, in 1876, by J. Rawson Lumby, B.D.

bria by Athelstane against the allied Scots and Danes. In the autumn of the year 934 Constantine the Second, King of Scotland, had attended a witenagemot at Buckingham. Eogan (Owen), Constantine's nephew, was king in Strathclyde, and after Constantine's return from Buckingham, he and Owen joined their forces against Athelstane, who marched northward and reduced them to submission. Athelstane's attention being then occupied by his interests in the affairs of France, Constantine planned a fresh attack, in concert with his son-in-law Olava Sitricson the Dane, Olave the Red, who, ousted by Athelstane from succession to the rule of Sitric his father in Danish Northumbria, had taken refuge in his Irish kingdom. Olave came back into the Humber with 615 ships, to join Owen of Strathclyde, his father-in-law Constantine and Adills and Yring, British princes, who were gathering their forces for another struggle, for another battle of Cattraeth. Olave is said to have gone into Athelstane's camp disguised as a gleeman, and to have played while the king feasted, taking note meanwhile of his points of attack. But a soldier who had served under him saw Olave burying the minstrel's reward that he disdained to carry out, and warned the king to shift his camp. He did so, and in the evening Werstan, Bishop of Sherborne, arriving with troops, camped on the ground Athelstane had quitted. Werstan was attacked in the night by Olave, and killed with all his attendants. Olave then directed his night attack to the king's new camping-ground, but was repulsed.* Two days afterwards the great battle was fought

* William of Malmesbury, ii. 6. The site of Brunanburh is not known. Mr. Scott Surtees connects the name with the sulphur springs or Brunans at Dinsdale on the Tees banks. Olave, he says, came up from the Humber and passed York; Athelstane turned off for Beverley, and attributed part of his success to St. Cuthbert, on whose territory part of Sockburn and Dinsdale Brunan stand. Norsemen fought on the side of Athelstane, among whom was the scald Egil, who composed a

at Brunanburh, of which the unknown Saxon poet whose verse is inserted in the National Chronicle thus sang, after the manner of his fathers. With slight attention to the order of the words a strictly literal translation will fall into English rhythm:—

"*The Battle of Brunanburh*, AN. D.CCCC.XXXVII.

"This year King Athelstane, the Lord of Earls,
Ring-giver to the warriors, Edmund too,
His brother, won in fight with edge of swords
Life-long renown at Brunanburh. The sons
Of Edward clave with the forged steel the wall
Of linden shields. The spirit of their sires
Made them defenders of the land, its wealth,
Its homes, in many a fight with many a foe.
Low lay the Scottish foes, and death-doomed fell
The shipmen; the field streamed with warriors' blood,
When rose at morning tide the glorious star,
The sun, God's shining candle, until sank
The noble creature to its setting. There
Lay many a northern warrior, struck by darts
Shot from above the shield, and scattered wide
As fled the Scots, weary and sick of war.
Forth followed the West Saxons, in war bands
Tracking the hostile folk the livelong day.
With falchions newly-ground they hewed amain
Behind the men who fled. The hard hand-play
The Mercians refused to none who came,
Warriors with Olave, o'er the beating waves,
And, borne in the ship's bosom, came death-doomed
To battle in that land. There lay five kings
Whom on the battle-field swords put to sleep,
And they were young; and seven of Olave's jarls,
With Scots and mariners an untold host.
There the Prince of the Northmen fled, compelled
To seek with a small band his vessel's prow.
The bark drove from the shore, the king set sail,

poem on the victory. To these days also are assigned the incidents of the later legends of Guy of Warwick and the Danish giant Colbrand, whom he slew.

And on the fallow flood preserved his life.
There fled the hoary chief, old Constantine;
Regaining his north country, not to boast
How falchions met. For on the trysting place,
Slain in the fight, his friends, his kinsmen lay;
And his son too, young to bear arms, he left,
Mangled with wounds, upon the slaughter-ground.
The warrior, grizzly-locked, had not to boast,
The old deceiver, of the clash of bills.
Nor Olave more; nor any that were saved.
They could not laughing say that at the rush
Of banners, clash of weapons, meet of spears,
The tryst of men, they, on the battle-stead,
Were better in the works of war; that there
On the death-field they played with Edward's sons

Then in their nailed ships on the stormy sea
The Northmen went, the leavings of red darts.
Through the deep water Dublin once again,
Ireland, to seek, abased. Fame-bearing went
Meanwhile to their own land, West Saxon's land,
The brothers, King and Atheling. They left
The carcases behind them to be shared
By livid kite, swart raven, horny-beaked,
And the white eagle of the goodly plumes,
The greedy war-hawk and grey forest wolf,
Who ate the carrion.

Slaughter more than this
Was in this island never yet. Sword's edge
Never laid more men low, from what books tell,
Old chroniclers, since hither from the east
Angles and Saxons over the broad sea,
Looking for land sought Britain, proud war smiths
Who won the country from the conquered Welsh."

If the historiographer of the Saxons was not at this period himself a poet he was well inclined to verse. The Chronicle breaks into rhyme again when the Northumbrians in 941—Athelstane having died the year before—defiantly gave Olave his inheritance; and in a few unpoetical lines it records that

Other verse of the Saxon Chronicle.

Athelstane's successor, Edmund, subdued Mercia and released from the Danes the five towns, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby. Again, under the year 958, the date of the accession of Edgar, a poem celebrates his prosperous and peaceful reign, and his piety and wisdom, barring the one fault, that

> "He loved foreign vices and brought heathen manners too fast within this land, and enticed hither outlandish men and allured pernicious people to this country. But may God grant him that his good deeds be more prevailing than his misdeeds, for his soul's protection upon the long journey."

Under the date 973, the fact that in the sixteenth year of his reign, and at the age of thirty, Edgar caused himself to be anointed king at Bath, on the day of Pentecost, by Dunstan and Oswald, gives occasion for a metrical record, versifying names and dates and ages. There are two short poems in the Chronicle upon the death of Edgar in 975. One of them takes ten lines to say that the day of his death was July 8. Thus: "Children of people name, Men on earth, The month everywhere, In this land, Those who erewhile were, In the art of numbers, Rightly instructed, July month, When departed, On the eighth day, The young Edgar from life." With equal vivacity this writer tells in the same copy of verse that Cyneweard Bishop of Wells died ten nights before Edgar; that Edgar was succeeded by Edward; that the great Earl Oslac was banished; and that there was in the same year a comet. Another piece of verse inserted under this year in the Chronicle denounces the Ealdorman Ælfhere, who destroyed Ethelwold's monasteries. A dozen lines expressing, under date 1002, misery of a town taken by the Danes, complete the catalogue of scraps of verse inserted in the Chronicle. The one really good piece among them all is that on the battle of Brunanburh; but the entry concerning

Ælfhere and the monasteries leads us to another relic of the later Anglo-Saxon poetry, the fragment which describes the death of Ealdorman Byrhtnoth at the battle of Maldon.

Byrhtnoth was a brave and pious ealdorman of the East Saxons, who before his death gave all his lands to the Church. He took the part of the Benedictines when, at the accession of Edgar's son Edward, the country was divided by faction for and against them, and Ælfhere, the Ealdorman of Mercia, expelled them from the monasteries in his territory. Afterwards, in the year 994, and in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, when the Northmen under Justin and Guthmund attacked Ipswich and avenged a previous defeat by ravaging the country round about, Byrhtnoth, disdainfully challenged by them, fought with them at Maldon, in Essex. He was defeated, and was himself killed in a battle, which to the king seemed so disastrous that the raising of money to buy peace from the Danes after this time first appeared as a recognised tax, under the name of Danegeld. This battle was the subject of an animated poem, of which there is still extant the copy of a fragment containing about six hundred and fifty lines. The only known MS. was burnt in the fire at the Cotton Library, after the poem had been copied by Thomas Hearne, and printed by him as prose at the end of his edition of the Chronicle of John of Glastonbury.

Byrhtnoth.

The Death of Byrhtnoth.

The poet tells how Byrhtnoth trained his bands, and how the herald of the Vikings came with threats demanding gold for peace, but Byrhtnoth raised his buckler, shook his spear, and made resolute answer. The warriors marched to the estuary (of the Blackwater at Maldon, in Essex), but the inflowing tide divided them. They waited, impatient, for the ebb. Then, when the tide suffered it, great advantage was conceded, the invaders were allowed to cross the ford, and Byrhtnoth shouted across the cold river, "Warriors, hear! Free space is given you; come quickly over as men to the battle! God only knows

which of us shall be masters of the slaughter-field." They came, and the hour was come when the fated warriors should fall. Wulfmær, Byrhtnoth's sister's son, was mangled with the battle-axe. A Danish chieftain, advancing against Byrhtnoth, wounded him with his spear, and fell under the earl's stroke. Again Byrhtnoth was wounded by a dart that the boy Wulfmær plucked from his flesh. Hurling it back he laid low with it him who had too surely reached his lord. One came to plunder Byrhtnoth, but was beaten off by the wounded earl with his battle-axe. But then his large-hilted sword dropped from his hand, he could no longer stand firmly on his feet. He looked heavenward, and prayed for his soul. The heathen bands mangled his body, and cut down the youths Ælfnoth and Wulfmær, who stood by it. Then fled from the fight those who durst no longer stay, Godric, son of Odda, first to fly, though he had ever shared the goods of his chieftain; he and his brother Godwy fled to the woods. But dauntless warriors desired to avenge their leader. Alfwine, young in years, bravely encouraged them. Offa supported him with words of shame against the coward Godric, whose flight, for he rode so noble a horse in the fight, had been mistaken by many a man for that of the chief himself, and therefore was their host dispersed. Leofsuna pledged himself not to retire one step from the field, he would die in arms, and rushed forth raging to the fight again. Dunmere brandished his spear, shouted to all the host that they should avenge Byrhtnoth. Æscferth, Edward the tall chief, Offa, suddenly cut down in the fight, joined again in the crashing of bucklers. The aged Byrhtwold counselled them on. "I am old, yet will I not stir hence." Godric, not he who had fled, cheered them on, rushing with the foremost he poured forth his darts and sped his death spear against the pirates.*

So in the heat of conflict we part from them, for here the fragment ends.

Paraphrase of the Psalms of David.

In the National Library at Paris there is a large folio MS. of the eleventh century, containing an Anglo-Saxon Paraphrase of the Book of Psalms, which has been already referred to.† It once

* There is a full prose translation of this poem, and of the poem on the Grave, in Conybeare's "Illustrations." I have here rather described the substance of Byrhtnoth than expressed its spirit. But that will be found in a verse translation by Lieut.-Col. Lumsden, which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for March, 1887.

† "E. W." II. 203.

was in the possession of Jean Duc de Berri, and, as its discoverer believed, had originally belonged to Dukes of Normandy. Its existence was made known by Gerard Gley, who was discoverer also of the "Heliand." Benjamin Thorpe inquired at Paris for this MS., and, having found that it had been rightly described, published it in 1835, at the cost of the University of Oxford.

Of a Latin Psalter with Anglo-Saxon interlinear glosses there were several MSS., and there was also an edition printed by John Spelman in 1640. The English Psalter published by Thorpe gives the first fifty Psalms in a free prose translation, and the rest in verse. But Bouterwek found in a Benedictine Book of Offices passages of extract which show that the metrical version originally included the first fifty psalms. The version of the fiftieth Psalm is found also in a MS. of the Cotton collection. It has a prose introduction of its own on David, and an independent close; both indicating that it originally stood alone. There is reason to think that this psalm was produced in Kent as a separate work, in the eighth century, or at the beginning of the ninth. The others, I think, are of the tenth century, and not by Aldhelm. The Latin Hymns of the Anglo-Saxon Church, with an interlinear West Saxon gloss, derived chiefly from a manuscript of the eleventh century, preserved in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, were edited by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson for the Surtees Society in 1851. The same editor had issued for the same society in two volumes (1842-7), an Anglo-Saxon and Early English Psalter, with glosses, which Henry Sweet has shown to be not Northum-

* "Libri Psalmorum Versio Antiqua Latina; cum Paraphrasi Anglo-Saxonica, partim soluta oratione, partim metrice composita. Nunc primum è cod. MS. in Bibl. Regia Parisiens. adservato descripsit et edidit Benjamin Thorpe, S.A.S. Soc. Lit. Isl. Hafn. Soc. Hon. Oxonii, e Typographeo Academico. MDCCCXXXV."

brian but Kentish, and which is cited as "the Kentish Psalter" by students of First-English dialect.*

Benjamin Thorpe also published by subscription in 1865, "Diplomatarium Anglicum Ævi Saxonici," a collection of English charters from the reign of King Ethelbert of Kent, in the year 605, to that of William the Conqueror. It contains, first, Miscellaneous Charters, illustrating English constitutional law; then follow Wills and Bequests; then Constitutions of Guilds; then Manumissions, with an added illustration of the careful note taken of the pedigrees and marriages of serfs upon the land. The editor pointed out the fraudulent origin of some of these charters; for abbots and brethren could sometimes produce unexpected and convenient papers to avert danger to property. Throughout this volume there is translation of First-English into Modern English. An Anglo-Saxon charter usually began with a short invocation of Christ or the Trinity, then passed through a moral preamble to the grant itself, which was followed by a curse on those who made it void, the date, and signatures. The Anglo-Saxon year began on Christmas Day, and computation was, after the establishment of Christianity, from the year of the Incarnation, with usually the number of the Indiction, a constantly-recurring cycle of fifteen years, named from the Indictio, or edict of the Emperor or of the Pope. In England, till the eighth century, this Indiction was that of the Emperor, which began on the 24th of September. That of the Pope began with the new year, on the 25th of December, or the 1st of January.

"Diplomatarium Ævi Saxonici."

Form of Charters.

We turn from law to medicine and other forms of

* It is in the Cotton Collection, Vespasian, A, i. For its grammar, see Rudolf Zeuner, "Die Sprache des Kentischen Psalters. Ein Beitrag zur Angelsächsischen Grammatik" (Halle, 1882).

Science. The Rev. Oswald Cockayne produced in 1864, 1865, and 1866, in three volumes, what he described as "Leechdoms, Wortcunning, and Starcraft of Early England. Being a Collection of Documents, for the most part never before printed, illustrating the History of Science in this country before the Norman Conquest." * These volumes contain a translation into First-English of the Herbarium ascribed to Apuleius, from a MS.† rather after than before A.D. 1000, and of a Herbarium of Dioscorides. There is a copy also of the First-English text in the Bodleian,‡ with spaces left for the drawings, but these were not filled in. This MS. includes the First-English translation of the "Medicina de Quadrupedibus" of Sextus Placitus, which Mr. Cockayne also printed. These treatises are compilations of the healing properties ascribed to plants and to parts of animals. They are of considerable interest in the study of old country beliefs and for explanation of some of the common names of plants. The Herbarium instructs men to cure a broken head by swallowing two drachms of powdered betony in hot beer; to cure a sore head by binding vervain to it; and to find another use for vervain by laying it over the bite of a mad dog with whole seed corn. When the corn is swollen by the moisture it should be thrown to fowls, and if the fowls will not eat it, the patient must go on with the remedy till all the poison has been drawn out; that will be when the fowls no longer think the corn uneatable. Another remedy against the bite of a mad dog was a poultice of beetroot

Science.

* This work is in the "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages," published by the authority of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls.

† Bibl. Cott. Vitellius, C, iii. It was illuminated with two pictures and coloured drawings of the plants. It was greatly damaged by the fire in 1731.

‡ Hatton, 76.

pounded with coarse salt. Beewort (*Acorus calamus*) was so called because it was hung in a hive to prevent bees from forsaking it. When a man's hair falls off, it shall grow again if he put juice of watercress upon his nose.

Among parts of animals in great use was a hart's horn, usually burnt to ashes. All parts of a hare were medicinal. A hare's brain in wine was a remedy against oversleeping; and a hare's sinews swallowed raw were good against the bite of a spider. If you would brighten the eyes, smear over them honey mixed with a hare's gall, or the gall of a wild buck; and a goat's gall will clear the face of pimples. When your head aches, bind over it a new cheese made of goat's milk. To ensure sleep, lay a wolf's head under the pillow. Let those who are much troubled by ghosts eat lion's flesh; a remedy, we may perhaps think, as scarce as the disease. One can trace often the working of minds that invented these empirical remedies. Ghostseers are lean and nervous people; let them eat the flesh of a bold muscular beast. The hare is soon awakened; let the drowsy take his brain.

Mr. Cockayne gave also in his volume a First-English Leech Book from a unique manuscript.* This book, which occupies the second of his three volumes, is again only a collection of prescriptions gathered from different sources. There is no theory joined to the practice. It includes, in aid of possessed persons, an emetic for throwing up the devil, made, of course, with *aqua sancta* in the place of *aqua pura*. Another prescription for demoniacs is made up of herbs over which seven masses have been sung, with directions that it shall be drunk out of a church bell.

Prognostics, Charms, &c.

Recipes from the ancients, prognostics from dreams, from thunder, from the age and light of the moon, and from the stars, are also to be found written in First-English. Dreamers who seek significance

* MS. Reg. 12, D, xvii.

in dreams have ceased to bear in mind that the significance will vary according to the day of the moon's age when the dream is dreamed; just as the texture of a man's future life depends upon the day of the moon's age on which he first saw light. If he be born when the moon is one day old, he shall be of long life and fairly prosperous; but if he be born when the moon is two days old, he shall be sickly. What man is there now living who can carry on that record of fate to the fourteenth day of the moon? If a man be born on Sunday, he shall live free of care and be handsome; if he be born on Monday, he shall be killed by manslaughter, be he layman or priest; four days of the week produce men variously unhappy and bad, leaving only three days for the production of men who shall be happy and good. But who knows now what are the days on which the turn is for the bad men to be born. So do the cloud-capped towers of our science perish and pass even from memory. The Anglo Saxon farmer had his charm against bad times. He cut before dawn four sods from the four sides of his land. He put upon the place whence each sod had been taken oil, honey, barm, mixed with the milk of every kind of beast upon the land, and leaves of every kind of tree and herb—with one exception, who knows what it is? He dropped holy water thrice upon the mixture, saying, in Latin, "Grow—multiply—replenish the earth," and then he said the Paternoster. After that he took the four sods to church, to have four masses said over them. Then he carried them back, before sunset, to the places from which they had been cut, laid them again in their places, set up four crosses inscribed with names of the four Evangelists, said his "Grow—multiply—replenish the earth" nine times; said his Paternoster nine times; bowed nine times to the earth; repeated a charm twenty-six lines long; turned himself round three times in the direction of the sun; recited the names of the saints; recited the Magnificat, three more

Paternosters, and another little charm. Then he took strange seed of almsmen, giving them twice as much in return. He bored a hole in his plough beam. He put into the hole incense, fennel, consecrated soap, and consecrated salt. He put the seed from the almsmen on the body of the plough, and spoke another charm thirty lines long. Then he spoke one shorter charm while the plough, so furnished, cut its first furrow. Then he baked a loaf as big as his two hands would hold, having kneaded into it flour of all grain upon the land, with milk and holy water. He laid the loaf under the furrow, and spoke a charm of twelve lines, with three more Crescites and three more Paternosters. Here is enough to keep a day busy from dawn to dusk. We should thrive well if we all worked as hard—in other ways—to conquer evil of the land.

CHAPTER XV.

CLOSE OF THE FIRST-ENGLISH PERIOD.

WULFSTAN, the second of that name who became Archbishop of York, succeeded Adulf, who died in June, 1002. He was of good family, and is said to have been an abbot before he was made archbishop.

Wulfstan Archbishop of York.

The year of Wulfstan's succession to the Archbishopric of York was that of the Mass Day, or Feast of St. Brice—the thirteenth of November—on which Ethelred ordered the massacre of all Northmen within his power. Northmen had come freely to form bands of fighting men, who should prosper in the favour of the English kings. They regarded the throne as a gift stool, and no doubt were turbulent, but they had established peaceful homes among us, and their massacre repeated on a large scale in this country the treachery that once gave rise to the fight at Finnesburg. Edith, sister of Sweyne and aunt to Canute, had married in this country and become a Christian. She was beheaded, after witnessing the murder of her husband and her son. For the next four or five years Sweyne ravaged the land. Then Danegeld was paid, a tribute of the worth of 720,000 acres of land, to buy a truce. King Ethelred raised more men, and by a demand upon the people that was the first suggestion of "ship money," raised a great fleet. But the powers of the land were paralysed by civil war. In 1009, Thurkill's host anchored in the Thames, ravaged the Isle of Wight, but found London well defended. Next year they

invaded East Anglia, defeated the English at Ipswich, and marched on into the land. Again they were bought off, while civil discords weakened the sword hand of England. In 1012, the Northmen, strengthened by ten thousand disaffected English, besieged Canterbury, which was opened to them by a revolted Englishman within the town, and was sacked and burnt. Alphege the archbishop they imprisoned, in hope of extracting gold from him. Failing in that hope they cast bones, horns of oxen, battleaxes at him in a drunken feast, and he was finally killed by a Dane whom he had himself baptised.

Wulfstan Archbishop of York was then in high favour with Ethelred. In the year 1006 he had been one of a council at Eynsham, in Oxfordshire, when thirty-two canons were enacted for guidance of the Church, with especial reference to the ravages of the Danes. After the taking of Canterbury the money paid to the Northmen was the price of 1,152,000 acres of land. Thurkill was made an English earl, and undertook to defend England for Ethelred. To Sweyne this appeared treason. He sailed with a great fleet up the Humber, gathered Danes in England to his standard, left his son Canute in charge of the fleet, and marched south without a check till he reached London, which was manfully defended and could not be taken. But when Ethelred fled from London to the Isle of Wight, sending afterwards his wife and children to the court of Richard Duke of Normandy, the Londoners opened their gates to Sweyne.

The invader became king, and after his sudden death the Danes elected his son Canute. The English restored Ethelred, on condition that he governed better than he did before. He agreed to be their good lord and make needed reforms, upon condition that they submitted to him without fraud or treachery. In the year 1015 there was the treacherous slaughter, at a banquet, of the Danish leaders,

Sigferth and Morcar, who had come to Oxford to join in a council of the two nations, and Ethelred's strong son Edmund, called Ironside, seized and married Sigferth's widow.

Civil dissensions became fiercer. Ethelred died on St. George's Day, 1016. Edmund succeeded to the contest with Canute, which he sustained with vigour till he was defeated at Assingdune, by help of treachery within his camp. Partition of the realm was next agreed on, after Edmund's offer of single combat with Canute had been declined. Soon afterwards Edmund died by treachery, and Canute, King of the Danes and of the Swedes and of the Northmen, was king also here, until his death in November, 1035.

Wulfstan Archbishop of York was loyal subject to Ethelred, to Edmund, to Canute. He was present at Canterbury in 1018, when Canute granted privileges; he was present with Canute in 1020 at the dedication of a church at Assington. He consecrated Archbishop Ethelnoth and Edmund Bishop of Durham. Also he was benefactor to the church of Ely.

Wulfstan held, too, the bishopric of Worcester, which placed him as a suffragan to the Archbishop of Canterbury; but Worcester compensated for the desolation which the Danes had brought upon Northumbrian estates.

A collection of fifty-four homilies,* ascribed to Lupus Episcopus, were said by Wanley to be Wulfstan's. Three of the four known MSS. seem to have come from Worcester, of which Wulfstan was bishop, and the only other Wolf bishop in the eleventh century was an obscure Athulf, Bishop of Hereford, whose see was out of the way of

* Among the Parker MSS. at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. It was Archbishop Matthew Parker's bequest that made this college so rich as it is. Other homilies of Wulfstan's are in Bibl. Cotton. Nero, A, i.; and Tiberias, A, iii. Five transcribed by Junius are in the Bodleian.

Danish ravages. One homily, written in 1012, on the Danish invasion, was printed separately, and two more, printed by Hickes, were, besides this, all that had been printed before Mr. Arthur Napier, now Professor of English Literature at Oxford, published his text of all the homilies ascribed to Wulfstan, to which he will add, in a second division not yet published, an inquiry into their authenticity.* His thesis presented in 1882 for the Doctor's degree at Göttingen had been on the works of Wulfstan. In his introduction to the text, however, Professor Napier points out that in one part there is a corrupt copy of a passage in the poem on Doomsday;† that another is by Ælfric, and has been printed in Kemble's edition of "Salomon and Saturnus" (1848); that another is wholly, and yet another in great part, a sermon of Ælfric's; and that another is found in a fragmentary form in the Blickling Homilies, while others are artless compilations. Its illustration of the ruin and confusion in the land, the loosening of the most sacred ties when the land suffered alike under invasion and civil war, still gives to the sermon that William Elstob printed, the thirty-third in Professor Napier's collection, a special interest.

Wulfstan wrote also an Encyclical Letter to the people of his diocese, and is said to have produced a code of laws of the Northumbrian priests, which is in a MS. at

* [Sammlung Englischer Denkmäler in Kritischen Ausgaben. Vierter Band.] Wulfstan; Sammlung der him zugeschriebenen Homilien, nebst Untersuchungen über hire Eehtheit, herausgegeben von Arthur Napier. Erste Abtheilung: Text und Varianten (Berlin, 1883). No more than the text has yet been published [December, 1887].

The Sermon upon the Danish invasion was printed by William Elstob, at Oxford, in 1701: "Sermo Lupi Episcopi, Saxonice. Latinam interpretationem notasque adjecit Gulielmus Elstob." This is given also in Hickes's "Dissertatio Epistolaris," with the Homilies numbered XXXV. and XXXIX. in Napier's collection.

† "E. W." II. 314.

Corpus Christi College, and has been several times printed.* He wrote also two Pastoral Letters, which Ælfric Buta translated by his wish out of Latin into English.

There is a tradition that Wulfstan, not long before his death, visited the church at Ely, to which he had long been a benefactor, and as he went up the church the staff on which he leant sank deep into the ground. "Here, then," he said, "shall be my place of rest." After his death at York on the 28th of May, 1023, he was therefore buried on that spot in the cathedral at Ely. When the body was afterwards removed during some restoration work it was found to have fallen into dust, but still the splendour of its vestments was undimmed.†

Archbishop Wulfstan was the last English writer of mark before the Conquest.

There belongs to the eleventh century a didactic Dialogue between the Emperor Hadrian and Ritheus.‡ There is a translation also of a selection from the Distichs of Cato.§ There is an Anglo-Saxon version of the story of Apollonius of Tyre,‖ which was published by Benjamin Thorpe in 1843, with a literal translation. There is a translation from Latin of a short piece on the Wonders of the East, printed by the Rev. Oswald

Paraphrase and Translation

* By David Wilkins in "Leges Anglosaxonicæ, ecclesiasticæ et civiles," folio, 1721; and by Thorpe in "Ancient Laws and Institutes of England," 1840.

† History of Ely in Gale, quoted in the "Fasti Eboracenses. Lives of the Archbishops of York," by the Rev. W. H. Dixon, M.A., Canon Residentiary of York, &c. Edited and enlarged by the Rev. James Raine, M.A., Secretary of the Surtees Society. Vol. I., 1863.

‡ Bibl. Cott. Julius, A, ii. is the only MS. There is a transcript by Junius in the Bodleian.

§ In three MSS.: one at Trinity College, Cambridge, two in Bibl. Cott. Julius, A, ii. and Vespasian, D, xiv.

‖ In one MS. only, which is in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Cockayne, in 1861, with another short piece, "Alexander's Letter to Aristotle." *

Critics who disintegrate the Paraphrase of Cædmon bring sometimes into the close of the Anglo-Saxon period the most important part of it,† as the later Genesis, and look for evidences of indebtedness to Avitus. Alcimus Ecdicius Avitus was Archbishop of Vienne between the years 490 and 523. He was nephew to the Emperor Marcus Mæcilius Avitus, and excelled all writers of his age as a Latin poet. He wrote a poem of five books of hexameters on the Might of the Creator, the Origin of Evil, the Flood, and the Passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites. It was addressed to the Bishop Apollinarius of Clermont in Auvergne. He addressed also to his sister a poem in praise of virginity, and there remain sermons and other pieces of his. His works‡ were as well known to churchmen in the seventh or eighth century as in the tenth or eleventh; better, indeed, for in the earlier time the standard of culture was much higher. But in neither case is there clear evidence of influence of Avitus upon the Paraphrase ascribed to Cædmon.

The Rhyming Poem.

There is in the Exeter Book a rhymed poem, eighty-seven lines long, which carries its system of rhyme throughout in the manner of the Scandinavian poems called Rún-henda, where there is metre with consecutive end-rhymes. The word rún-henda only occurs twice in Scandinavian, and is supposed to be a misreading of rím henda. This form of poem was rare both in England and in Scandinavia. It was first used by Egil

* Both printed by Cockayne in his "Narratiunculæ Anglici Conscripta." There are two MSS. of the "Wonders of the East": Cotton. Tiberius, B, v., and Vitellius, A, xv., but only one MS. of "Alexander's Letter," which is also in Vitellius, A, xv.

† "E. W." II.

‡ The collected works of Avitus were published at Paris in 1643, edited by Jacques Sismond, a French Jesuit.

Skallagrimsson in his "Höfudlausn," a song written in the year 938, to save his head when chance had wrecked him on the English coast and put him in the power of his mortal enemy, Gunhilda, King Eric's queen, at York. He was to die if he did not compose a song in praise of Eric before dawn; and the sorceress queen sent a bird to hinder the work by worrying the poet with its noises at the window. Egil was hindered, but he saved his head. As he was twice in England, and such rhyming was new, Scandinavians say that Egil learnt it here, and we, with only one surviving Anglo-Saxon rhyming poem, say that the fashion of it was learnt from Egil's "Höfudlausn." Nobody knows. Our rhyming song is the lament of a rich man who has found his way into purgatory or other pain, and looks back on the life that he has lost. Mr. Thorpe, when he edited the Exeter Book, thought that this poem was a very much perverted version of the twenty-ninth and thirtieth chapters of Job. Grein fancied a resemblance in it to the close of "Elene," and thought that it was a rhyming poem written in his old age by Cynewulf. I agree with Rieger that it cannot be placed earlier than the tenth century. It belongs neither to the blossom nor the ripe fruit of First-English literature, but to the time of its decay.*

We return now to a late poem, which has been already mentioned.* A few lines written in the margin of a volume of homilies,† in the East Anglian dialect, apparently the latest verse of the Anglo-Saxon period, represent gloomy and pitiless Death forcing on man, in cruel detail, all the circumstances of his triumph. *The Grave.*

The Grave.

Death speaks to Man. "For thee was a house built ere thou wast born; for thee was a mould shapen ere thou camest of thy mother. Its height is not yet prepared, nor its depth measured, it is not yet seen

* "E. W." II. p. 205. † Bodleian MSS. NE. F, 4, 12.

how long it may be for thee. When they shall bring me thee to where thou shalt be, I shall measure thee and the earth afterwards. Thy house is not highly built, it is low and hateful when thou liest in it; the heelways are low, the sideways low, the roof is built full-nigh thy breast; so thou shall dwell in earth full cold, dim, and dark. That den rots on your hand. Doorless is that house, and dark it is within; there thou art fast prisoner, and death holds the key. Loathly is that earth-house and grim to dwell in; there thou shall dwell and worms shall part thee. Thus thou art laid and most hateful to thy friends; thou hast no friend who will come to thee, and who will ever inquire how that house liketh thee, who shall ever open the door for thee and come down after thee, for soon thou becomest loathly and hateful to look upon. [For soon is thy head bereft of hair; albeit its locks scatter beauty, none will with clasp of finger stroke it.*]" . . .

The Anglo-Saxon Gospels.

But the mind of our forefathers did not flinch from the gloom of the grave. Beyond that they looked to the eternal mansion, of which it is but the small wicket-gate through which men pass in to their home from the day's labour in their Master's vineyard. When, after many years, Church reforms were in question, the example of our ancient Church was set forth in an edition of the Anglo-Saxon version of the Four Gospels, issued in 1571, by Archbishop Matthew Parker, edited, with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth, by Foxe the martyrologist. That edition was made from a copy in the decaying Saxon of the Anglo-Norman times. The second edition was from an earlier copy; † but in each case the Gospels, in the language of the land, are divided into portions for appointed days, so arranged as to secure the public reading of them, without reservation or cloak of an unknown tongue, by the English clergy to their people.

* This is added in another handwriting.

† Printed at Dordrecht in 1665, and edited by Dr. Marshall, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, together with the Gothic version that had been given by Junius. The text of the First-English Gospels—"Tha Halgan Godspel on Englisc"—was also edited by Mr. Benjamin Thorpe in 1842.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NORTHMEN.

Of the peopling of Iceland; of the Islendiga Bók, not written until after the Norman Conquest of England; of the Landnama Bók, written in the thirteenth and enlarged in the fourteenth century; of the Prose Edda ascribed to Snorri Sturluson, who was murdered in 1241; and of the Elder or Poetical Edda said to have been collected by Sæmund Sigfusson, who died in the year 1135, something has already been said when considering the peoples who contributed to the formation of England.* It was said at the same time that the oldest of the Edda poems date no farther back than the ninth century. We may now look at them more closely, since we have reached that part of our story when Northmen—who as direct settlers upon our coast had added strength to the life of our own north country—invaded from the south, as Northmen modified by years of settlement in Normandy.

The literature of Scandinavia was still growing in vigour at the time of the Norman Conquest of England, but its full development was not attained until the first half of the thirteenth century. Although we must now speak of the Northmen, yet in doing so we must usually pass beyond the year 1066 to find old faith and old custom as they survive to us in records of a later generation.

* "E. W." I. 264—275.

The word Edda applied to a gathering of ancient Scandinavian poems, mythical and heroic, has been variously accounted for. In a poem of the elder Edda—"Rigsmál"—Moðir, Amma, and Edda, are Mother, Grandmother, and Great-grandmother. The use of the word as name for a work full of ancient legends might mean, therefore, that they were Old Wives' Tales. The word was first applied to Snorri Sturluson's Prose Edda; perhaps not by himself, since it is first inscribed as the name of that work on a MS. of it written fifty or sixty years after his death. After the discovery in 1643* of the collection of ancient poems ascribed to Sæmund by the discoverer, Bishop Brynjolfr Sveinsson,† but made really in the thirteenth century, the name of Edda—Poetical Edda, as distinguished from the Prose—was extended by Sveinsson to that also. The Prose Edda told its stories as part of its teaching of the Art of Poetry. There was traditional use of the old mythology; a sketch of it was therefore necessary to enable later poets properly to understand their terms of art. Jacob Grimm traced the word Edda to a root "azd," noble, with which he associated the Middle High German "art," the Anglo-Saxon "ord," a point, and the Icelandic "oddr," from which he derived Edda as a feminine form, meaning that which stands at the point or head of anything. Arne Magnusson, seeing that poetry had been called, in poems of the fourteenth century, Eddu-list—the art of Edda—and its rules Eddu-reglur, suggested that the word Edda was from an old word, "óðr," meaning mind, or poetry.‡

The Eddas.

Of the poems of the Elder Edda, to which additions

* "E. W." I. 273.

† The MS. discovered by Sveinsson is now in the Royal Library at Copenhagen. It is on fifty-three leaves of much-thumbed parchment, in writing of the fourteenth century, and contains thirty-seven pieces.

‡ See also Prof. Rhys's suggested origin of the word, "E. W." I. 274.

have been made from other MSS. than the Codex Regius at Copenhagen, some refer to the gods and some to heroes. First in the series is the "Völuspa," a "spae" wife's inspired vision of the life and death of the world, according to the old faith of our forefathers. "Spá" is the Scottish "spae," a sight beyond our human ken, and "völu" is the genitive of "völva," of which word there is a suggestion that it may possibly have been picked up by the Greeks from outlying tribes in an earlier form, "svölva," and become their σίβυλλα. The "völva," or wise woman, had a recognised place in the old Scandinavian life. She went through the country with a following of maidens, at the autumn feasts and sacrifices, sat on a high seat at the feasts, sang magic songs of fate, and told men secrets of the future. In the first poem of the elder Edda the conception is of a sublime Völva on her high seat, prophesying at the Feast of the Gods, and addressing her chant first to Odin, then to gods and men.

The Poetical Edda.

Völuspa.

1. They called her Heið, where she came to a house,
The witchwoman cunning in words;
She dealt in sorcery, she worked her spells,
Everywhere, with mind intent,
She worked her spells;
Always she had the love
Of the bad bride.

2. Alone she sat without, when there came
The old one,* the Frowner, and looked in her eye;
"Why do you ask me, why do you tempt me?
Odin, I know all, know where your eye was lost." †

* Odin.

† Odin had a single eye, type of the Heavens with one eye, the Sun. The other was left in pledge for a draught from Mimir's Well, the waters of wisdom, that lie under one of the roots of the ash Yggdrasil.

3. The father of hosts gave her necklace and rings
To fetch wise spells, prophetic charms,
. . . . . .
She saw wide and broad over all the worlds.

4. Listen, of all holy children I ask,
Of the great and the small, of the race of Heimda
Thou wilt, Father of Slain, that I tell forth thy cra
The far sayings of men as I heard them of old.

5. I mind me of the giants, born of yore,
They who aforetime were my fosterers,
I mind me of nine homes, of nine supports,
The great mid pillar in the earth below.*

6. Once was of old
Where Ymir dwelt;
There was no sand, no sea,
Nor the cool wave.

* This passage—

níu man ek heima
níu íviðjur
miötvið mæran
fyr mold neðan—

is variously interpreted. Cleasby in his Icelandic Dictionary suggests doubtfully that "íviðjur" means ogresses, and thinks that perhaps they refer to the nine giantesses who were the mothers of Heimdal. Benjamin Thorpe translated them into trees, and read in the next line "miötvið" as the mid tree, Yggdrasil; whilst Cleasby held that "miötvið" was miswritten for "miötuð," equivalent to the First-English "Metod," Measurer or Dispenser, as a name for God. As to the question between ogresses and trees, "íviðja," feminine, means an ogress, probably akin to "inwid," fraud; but "viðr," kin to First-English "wudu," is a tree, or wood, or timber, whence a derivative may mean prop or pillar, and so Ettmüller reads "íviðjur" as props, and "miötvið" the mid prop, Yggdrasil; while for the nine homes he cites an old song that makes them (1) the Blue; (2) the Home of the Winds; (3) the Wide Blue Sky; (4) the Far Surrounding; (5) the Cold; (6) the Warm: (7) the Immeasurable; (8) the Sender of Storm; (9) the All Surrounding.

Earth was not to be found,
Nor heavens above,
But the great void was there,
And nowhere grass.

7. Ere the Sons of Bur,
They who shaped the mid earth,
Had uplifted its table,
And the sun shone from south
On the structure of stone.
Then with the green herb
The ground was grown over.

8. The sun threw from the south
Her companion the moon,
And laid her right hand
On the borders of heaven.*
The sun knew not where
Were the halls that she owned;
The moon knew not what
Was the power he had;
The stars knew not where
Were the stations for them.

9. Then went all the Rulers,
The gods to the judgment-seat,
The gods † the most holy,
Around it took counsel.

* Or, on the horses of heaven. "Himin-ioður" the horizon, "jaðar," an edge or border, forms "joðurr." "Himin-ióðyr" could be from "jór" (Old High German, "ehu," Latin "equus"), a horse, which yields "jóðyr," meaning draught animals.

† "Ginnheilug goð." "Heilug" is neuter (*m.* helgir, *f.* helgar, *n.* heilög and heilug). God in our old heathen times was neuter, and almost always plural; not to suggest plurality, but majesty and mystery. The "ginnheilug goð" are heavenly powers, without special name, ruling the universe. After the introduction of Christianity the word "goð" became masculine singular, but never took the masculine suffix "r," and the root vowel was changed to "u." The neuter, without change to "u," was then used, in the singular and plural, of false gods only, as "solar goð," Apollo.

They gave names to the night
And the waning moons,*
The morning they named also,
And the mid day,
Undern,† and eventide,
To count the years.

10. The gods met together
In Idafield ;‡
Altar and temple
There they built high.
Forge-hearths they laid ;
Treasures they made ;
They shaped the tongs,
Prepared the tools.

11. They played draughts in their homes,§
They were glad,
They had no want of gold,

* "Nótt ok niðjum." "Nið" was the waning, "ný" the new or waxing moon, up to and including the full moon ; so "ný ok nið" was alliterative for full moon and no moon. "Niða myrkr" was darkness with no moon, and used to mean pitch dark without sense of any reference to the moon.

† "Undorn" was a term used in all Teutonic languages for a light mid meal between the chief meals, and then derived to the sense of a time of day – morning at nine, or afternoon at three. Here it means three o'clock, and so is placed between midday and evening.

‡ The Idavöll was in the midst of the divine abode.

§ "Tefldu i túni." Playing at tables or draughts was very ancient, and is often mentioned in the old Norse poems. "Tún," town, was an enclosed home. The word "town" has a very limited meaning in our oldest literature. There was no town in Norway before Niðaros was founded by St. Olave in the tenth century ; but the real founder of towns in Norway was Olave the Quiet (1067—1093). In 1752 the only "town" in Iceland, Reykjavik, was a single isolated farm. Cleasby and Vigfusson, under the word "tún." Of this excellent Icelandic-English Dictionary let it be said that anyone with that volume and Wimmer's "Altnordische Grammatik" (translated by Sievers from the Danish into German, Halle, 1871) may find his own way into much enjoyment of old Scandinavian literature.

Until there came three
Of the giant maids,
Three of great strength,
Out of Jötunheim.

12. Then went all the Rulers,
The gods to the judgment-seat,
The gods the most holy
Around it took counsel,
The race of the Dwarfs
Who should shape
From the blood out of Brim,
From the lineage of Bláin.*

13. There was Móðsognir,†
The greatest to tell of
Among all the dwarfs,
And Durinn the other.
They made many beings
In human shape,
Dwarfs on the earth,
As Durinn said.

14. Nýi and Niði,
Norðri and Suðri,
Austri and Vestri,

with many more. There are here three stanzas of the names of dwarfs that seem to stand for outward forces touching human life: Full-Moon and New-Moon, North and South, East and West, All-thief and Tarry [Night and Twilight?]. Through the disguise of alliterative jingle there still glimmer suggestions of this under-thought, as Twist-elf [lightning] and Thunder. And at the close of the sixteenth stanza the spae woman says—

Now have I told of the dwarfs,
Gods and strong Counsellors,
Well counted up.

* *Brim*, surf; *Blá*, the blue wave.

† Móðsognir; móða, a large river; *sog*, an inlet, in compounds the inrush and outsuck of the surf.

Then follows another list of names—

Fili, Kili,
Fundinn, Nali,
Hepti, Vili,.

and so forth, through whose masks the living eyes seem still to peep with suggestions in this stanza that appear to play about the works of men, as plank and stream, or axe and house. The mythical spae woman goes on to tell of the dwarfs in Dwalin's people, down to Lofar. Still we are among mythical suggestions of the world about us and within us. Lofar, who ends the list, is Loki, the evil principle, who will fall when the gods fall, destroying and destroyed, in the last conflict between good and evil, which leads in the Scandinavian mythology to the ideal of a new heaven, a new earth, and one Supreme God who is all in all.

20. Then there came three
Out of the people,
Powerful, dearly loved ;
They found on the shore,
Having little of power,
Ask and Embla,*
Without purpose of life.

21. Breath they had not,
Sense they had not,
Blood nor manner,
Nor good colour.
Breath gave Odin,
Sense gave Hænir,
Blood gave Loðurr,
And good colour.

22. I know there stands an Ash
Named Yggdrasil,

* Ash and Elm, the Scandinavian Adam and Eve. Jacob Grimm derived Embla from "ambl," assiduous in labour ; a quality of woman.

A high tree sprinkled
With white dew;
Thence comes the dew
When it falls in the dales;
It stands ever green
Over Urdar's fountain.

23. Thence come women,
Greatly knowing,
Three from the Hall,
And stand round the tree.
One is called Urd,
Another Verðandi—
They cut upon staves—
Skild is the third;
They lay the lots,
Determine life
To the children of men,
They tell of destiny.

24. She knows the eye of Odin buried
In the famous Mimir fount;
From the pledge of the Father of slaughter
Mimir drinks mead every morn.
Know ye of that, or what?*

25. She knows the horn of Heimdall buried
In shade of the holy tree,
In herself she sees
The high spring rush
From the pledge of the Father of slaughter.
Know ye of that, or what?

26. She minds her of battle,
The first in the world,
When with spears they supported
The thirst after gold,
And scattered their fire

* "Vituð er enn, eða hvat?" "Hvat" here was an expression used when expecting reply in the negative.

In the Halls of Hár,*
Three times burnt
The three times born,†
Oft, not seldom,
Although yet she lives.

27. Then went all the Rulers
The gods to the judgment-seat,
The gods the most holy
Around it took counsel,
Whether the gods should
Suffer a loss, or
Whether the gods should
Take them a tribute.

28. Odin then stormed and
Shot among the people;
That was the first of the
Wars upon earth.
Of the burgs of the Æsir ‡
The bulwarks were broken,
The Vanir § were able
To tread in their fields.

29. Then went all the Rulers,
The gods to the judgment-seat,
The gods the most holy
Around it took counsel,
What had filled all the Heavens
With treason and spoil,
Or to the race of the Eotens
Had given the bride of Oðar. ||

* Hár, the High One, Odin,
His Hall is here, the Earth.

d thrice refined by fire.

† ls, nom. áss, gen. ásar, dat. æsi, plural nom. æsir. Therefore garðr being yard, enclosure, or home, Asgard was home of the gods.

§ Gods opposed to the Æsir, but afterwards reconciled.

|| Thrym, one of the Eotens, when the walls of Asgard were broken, had offered to rebuild them, asking as his price Freyja, the bride of Oður, with the sun and moon. By advice of Loki, the gods

30. But Thor alone was
Pressed on by anger,
Seldom sits he still
When such he hears,
Broken all words, oaths,
All holy pledges,
That were among them.

31. She sees the Valkyri *
Come from afar,
Ready to ride
To the meeting of gods.
Skuld held the shield,
But Skögul was the other,
Gunur, Göndal, and Geirskögel,
Now are named the Norns
Of the Lord of hosts,
Valkyri ready
To ride over earth.

32. Of Balder I see, too,
The bleeding God,
Of Odin's son
The hidden fate.

agreed, on condition that the Eoten completed the work in a year with no labour but that of himself and his horse. The Eoten succeeded, and the gods became angry with Loki, but Loki thwarted the giant by borrowing the wings of Freyja, and personating her as Thrym's willing bride. This bride ate an ox at the wedding breakfast, also eight salmon, and all the sweets provided for the ladies of the party, and she drank also three tubs of mead. Thrym was surprised; but pleased to hear that for eight days the bride had eaten or drunk nothing through desire for him. Then Thrym would kiss his bride, and her eyes glared fire. That was because for eight nights she had had no sleep, through desire for him. When Thrym called for Thor's hammer (that he had stolen) to be used in the marriage ceremony, Thor recovered it and struck the giant dead. This can be read as a myth of the year. In the "Völuspa" it is alluded to among signs of the lost innocence. There is another version of the tale in the "Thrymskvidha."

* Valkyri, choosers of the slain, sent by Odin to all battle fields to choose those who shall fall and bring them to Walhalla. The names next given suggest shield, shaft, war, entangled clue, and spear shaft.

On the high field
I see full grown,
Fair and slender,
The mistletoe.*

33. There was hurt therefrom,
As it seemed to me;
Danger was in the sorrow-flight
When Höður threw.
Balder's brother
Was newly born,
I saw the son of Odin
Fight, one night old.†

34. Then his hands he never washed,
Nor combed his head,
Before he bore to the balefire
Him who shot against Balder.
But Freyja wept in Feusálir
The woe of Walhalla.
Know ye of that, or what?

35. Then knew the Vala
How fetters of war—
They were bound the more surely—
Were twined from entrails. ‡

36. She sees how he was bound
In monster form,
Like the bad Loki.

* When Balder the Good was in danger, the Æsir charmed all things that they should not hurt him, but overlooked the slender mistletoe, which has no root in the earth. Then they amused themselves with throwing at him stones, hatchets, and so forth, that fell from him harmless. Loki, finding that the mistletoe had not been charmed, contrived to get the blind Höður to throw it, and by this Balder was pierced to death. It was simple blindness warring against light, upon prompting of the Spirit of Evil.

† This is Odin's son Wali, who represents the swiftness of the Spirit of revenge.

‡ When Loki was caught and bound by the gods he was bound on the points of rocks by cords made from his own intestines.

There sits Sigyn,*
Although she is not
Glad for her mate,
Know ye of that, or what?

37. Flows a stream in the East
Through the poison-dalè
With knives and with swords,
And Slidur its name.

38 There stands in the North,
Near Nida fell,
A golden hall
Of Sindri's race.
Another stands
At Okolvir,
Beerhall of Eotens,
Brimir its name.†

39. She sees a hall
Far from the sun,
In Náströnd,
Its doors turn to the North;
Fall poison drops
Through the windows in,
The hall is woven
Of serpents' spines.

40. She sees them wading
Through thick streams

* Sigyn, the wife of Loki, stood by him in his punishment and caught in a cup the drops of venom that fell from a serpent poised above. As the cup was filled she emptied it, but whenever she did so some drops fell upon Loki, which caused him to twist his body violently, and so cause earthquakes.

† Sindri is elsewhere named as one of the dwarfs who shaped the jewels of the gods, and Brimir was a giant. Náströnd, next mentioned, is the strand of the corpses (nár, a corpse), to which those went who died in their beds; as those who died in battle to Walhalla. In Náströnd is a house of torment for the wicked, not conceived as a place of fire, but of wading in poison stream, &c.

False-swearing men
And murderers,
And whisperers in women's ears
Whom others love;
There sucks Niðhoggr
The soulless corpses
Seized by the tearer of man.
Know ye of that, or what?

41. In the East sat the old one,
In the Iron Wood,*
And fostered there
The race of Fenrir.
Will come of them all
One worst,
The Moon's destroyer,
In a monster form.

42. He is fed on the marrow
Of fated men,
He sprinkles with red blood
The seat of the gods.
The sunshine is darkened
In summers to come;
All the storms blow.
Know ye of that, or what?

43. There sat on the hill,
And there struck on the harp,
The ogresses' guardian,
The joyous Egðir.†
There sang by him,
In the wildgoose wood,
The fair red cock
Whose name is Fiallar.

* Iárnviðr, a mythical wood whose trees had iron leaves. It was peopled by ogresses called Iarnvidjur. The "old one" is the giant wife of the wolf Fenrir, whose offspring are like wolves, one of whom, called Mánagarm, will one day swallow the moon.

† Egðir occurs nowhere else as a proper name in Scandinavian mythology. It is a name for the eagle, and I take him to be only a half personification of the eagle joyous in the prospect of slaughter.

44. To the gods sang
Gullinkambi,*
Wakened the warriors
With the war-father.
Under the earth
Is another that sings,
The dark red cock,
In Hela's halls.

45. Sorely howls Garm
By Gnipahell.†
The chains are broken,
The wolf runs;
The spae woman knows
Much, I see far things,
The wreck of the world
And the great gods' fall.

46. Brothers with brothers
Will war and bring death;
Kinsmen with kinsmen
Their kindred will break;
The world will be hard
And the wrong will be great.
The age of the Beard
Of the Sword—shields will shiver—
The age of the Storm and the Wolf are to come.
Before the World falls,
Man shall have no more reverence for man.

47. Mimir's sons ‡ play;
The mid prop takes fire,

* Golden comb, the cock that wakes the heroes in Walhalla to their daily fight. The third cock, next mentioned, is dark red, and will hereafter call the people of the underworld to war against the gods.

† Gnipahell was a narrow cavern, at the mouth of which was chained the dog Garm, who in the last struggle would break loose at the same time with the wolf Fenrir. Garm would destroy, and be destroyed by, the god Tyr.

‡ The Eoten.

At the call of the horn
Of Giallar.
Loudly blows Heimdall,
His horn is uplifted,
And Odin speaks
With Mimir's head.*

48. Yggdrasil trembles,
Yet the ash stands;
The old tree rustles
When the beast breaks free.
Fear is to all
In the bonds of Hel
Before they are seized
By Surtur's fire.†

49. How is it with the Æsir?
How is it with the Elfs?
There is din in all Eotenheim;
Æsir are meeting;
Dwarfs groan
At the gates of stone,
Guides of the mountain ways.
Know ye of that, or what?

50. Sorely howls Garm
By Gnipahell.
The chains are broken,
The Wolf runs;
I, the spae woman, know
Much, I see far things,
The wreck of the world
And the great gods' fall.

* The head of the wise Mimir, who kept the fountain at the root of Yggdrasil (see note to stanza 2) spoke with Odin after it had been cut off by the giants and sent by them to the Æsir.

† Surtur, a black giant born of fire, was to come to the last conflict with sons of Muspel, and purge the world with fire. He is black as smoke, and the fire flashing from the smoke is Surtur's sword.

51. From the East comes Hrym *
And lifts the shield;
Jörmungand † rolls
In giant wrath,
The Serpent beats the waves,
The Eagle screams,
He tears the corpses;
Naglfar is loose. ‡

52. From the east comes a ship,
The sons of Muspel come,
They sail over the sea,
But Loki steers.
The brood of the monster
Are all with that wolf,
And the brother of Bileist §
Fares with them.

53. From the south comes Surtur
With flaming sword,
From his sword there shineth
The sun of the gods;
Strong rocks clash,
The fiends are abroad,
Heroes tread hellways,
The heavens are rent.

54. Then to Hlín ‖ comes
Other harm,

*. Hrym is a Frost Giant who will steer Naglfar, the ship of the dead. Loki will steer the ship that brings the sons of Muspel, sons of fire.

† Jörmungandr, the Great Monster, is a name for the Midgard Serpent, begotten by Loki, and bred by the Eotens, till Thor threw him into the deep Ocean that surrounds the World. There he grew till he himself, holding his tail in his mouth, encircled all. In the last struggle he will be killed by, and kill, Thor.

‡ Naglfar was said to be a ship made of the parings of dead men's nails. Heed was taken, therefore, to the paring of nails before death, that the building of Naglfar might be delayed.

§ Loki, who had two brothers, Bileistr and Helblindi.

‖ Hlín was a goddess appointed by Freyja as the protectress of all

When Odin goes
Against the Wolf.
Beli's slayer,*
Brightly shining,
Fails with Surtur,
There falls he whom
Freyja loved.

55. Sorely howls Garm
By Gnipahell.
The chains are broken,
The Wolf runs.
I, the spae woman, know
Much, I see far things,
The wreck of the world
And the great gods' fall.

56. Then comes Widarr,† great son
Of the Father of Victory,
Ready to fight
With the carrion wolf;
He thrusts to the heart
Of Hwedrung's son‡
The steel through the gaping jaws.
So is the Father avenged.

57 is a stanza now but half legible.

who are in peril. Thence came a saying, Lean upon Hlín when the need comes.

* Beli was the bellowing storm wind, slain by Freyr, who represents sunshine and the fruitfulness of peace. His sister Freyja was goddess of love. In the last battle Freyr was to contend with Surtur, as Odin with the wolf Fenrir, and Thor with the Midgard Serpent.

† Widarr, who signifies, perhaps, the renewing power, after the wolf Fenrir, power of annihilation, has prevailed over Odin, engages with the wolf, plants his shoed foot in his throat, and tears his jaws asunder. From this belief grew a custom of preserving bits of leather from the toes and heels of shoes, which were to go to the making of Widarr's shoe. There was old treatment of the shoe as a type of good works that enable us to tread safely the rough, thorny ways of evildoing.

‡ Son for grandson. The Eoten Hwedrung was father to Fenrir's mother, Angirboda.

58. Now comes the great son of Hlódyn,*
Comes Odin's son to the fight
With the Worm.
The holy guardian of Midgard
Strikes him with wrath.
All men must make empty the homestead.
The son of Fiörgyn
Recoils nine feet,
Hurt by the serpent,
Heedless of harm.

59. The Sun grows black ;]
Earth sinks in sea ;
The cheerful stars
Forsake the sky.
Reeks the smoke and
Fireglow rages,
The high heat licks
The heavens themselves.

60. Sorely howls Garm
By Gnipahell,
The chains are broken,
The Wolf runs
I, the spae woman, know
Much, I see far things,
The wreck of the World
And the great gods' fall.

61. She sees arising
Once again
Earth from the waters,
Green once more.
The floods abate,
The erne flies over,
Who from the fells
Goes down to fish.

62. The Æsir meet
On Ida field,

* Thor's mother, Jördh, was called also Hlódyn and Fiörgyn. The stanza goes on to Thor's fight with the Midgard Serpent.

Hold counsel of
The great earth thong.*
There they recall
Great words of old,
And the far runes
Of Fimbultyr.†

63. Thereafter again
Shall be found on the grass
The wondrous golden balls
That in old days they owned.

64. The fields unsown
Again will grow ;
Bad shall be better,
Balder return ;
Höður and Balder shall dwell
In the Father's Heaven,
Truly the gods of the slain.
Know ye of that, or what ?

65. Then can Honir
Choose his lot,
. . .
And sons of two brothers
Shall dwell in Windheim.
Know ye of that, or what ?

66. A Hall she sees standing,
More bright than the sun,
Thatched all with gold,
On Gimil's‡ height.
Then shall the true folk dwell
Ever in joy.

67. Then comes the ruling of the Mighty Doom
In power from above,
Which speaks to all.

* The Midgard Serpent coiled about the earth.

† The unknown God.

‡ Gimil was the highest heaven, in which the just were to dwell for ever after the new creation that followed Ragnaröki, the twilight of the gods.

68. Now the dark dragon
Comes flying, the adder
Down from the Niðafells.
He bears on his wings,
Flying over the plain,
The dead serpent of Hate.*
Now she sinks; can no more.

So runs the "Völuspa," the first, and probably the oldest, poem in the Edda, though in its date later than "Beowulf." It may be of the ninth century. It opens to us the heart of the old faith of the Northmen in a myth of creation that shapes gods, dwarfs, giants, and monsters as forces of the world without us and within; that paints lost innocence, with growth of evil deed and evil speech. The growth of evil leads to a great struggle of conflicting powers, out of which breaks through the storm a new sun bringing a new day. There rises a brighter earth under a brighter heaven, through which the lost spirit of evil flies, bearing with it on its wings the dead spirit of hate. The prophetess then sinks back in her seat. She sees no more.

The whole mythology of which this is the groundwork was rich in wisdom, coloured by a thousand fancies that played over the stir of energetic life. The spiritual teacher of the Norseman spoke by parable; the priest was poet, and the poet was a man of action able to advise the warriors and the chief. In a world of fighting men he saw the ills of war, but allowed the warrior a heaven of his own, which gave him courage in the fight, for it was a heaven earned only by those who fell upon the battle-field. There was another place for those who left this world by a "straw death" upon their beds at home. But for all who could follow his thought there was a clear glance forward to "the far runes of

* Niðhöggr nái. That root of the great ash Yggdrasil which stretched over Niflheim was constantly gnawed at by the snake Niðhöggr.

Fimbultyr," to the end of the mere warrior's heaven, in a world at peace, where God should be truly known, and should be all in all. Read by the light of these bright flashes from the higher heaven of their aspiration, we may find, perhaps, some traces of a playful ridicule in the Walhalla that was painted as the soldier's paradise. Every morning when the heroes have dressed they go out into the yard and fight and kill one another, that—says Hár in the younger Edda—is their play; and then the chopped-up champions gather their pieces together and ride home to Walhalla to eat and drink. Their drink is mead from the teats of the she-goat Heiðrun, who fills a stoup every day so great that all the champions are full drunken out of it. Their meat is the boiled flesh of the boar Særimnir, who is sodden every day and eaten up, and whole again every evening ready to be boiled again next day. The heroes eat and are drunken, sleep, fight, cut one another up, come together, go to their mead and boiled pork in Walhalla, and so forth daily; not only happy in boiled pork for dinner every day, but—sacred monotony! —every day it is pork from the same old pig. Surely the shapers of this Paradise of Warriors laughed over their conception, for they are the earnest men who are the readiest with kindly mirth; and they went to the heart of the incomplete world, noisy with stupidities of strife that serve their purpose for the growth of man, and therefore are not all so stupid as they seem. At the heart of all they found, with the latest of our great poets,

> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off Divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

They shaped a day when there should be no more war, no more Walhalla, but man at peace with man, and the last Heaven uniting man to his Creator.

The poems in the Elder Edda deal with myths of gods

and myths of heroes. The myths of gods include, with the "Völuspa," the song of Grimnir, "Grimnismál." Grimnir is Odin. Under that name he comes in a blue mantle to King Geirröd, who has been tricked by Odin's wife into the belief that this visitor is an evil magician, and, therefore, sets him for eight days, without food, between two great fires. Geirröd's ten-year-old son, Agnar, pitying Grimnir, takes him a large horn of drink, which he empties just as the fire catches the border of his mantle. He drinks health to Agnar, instructs him of the dwellings of the gods, and declares to him his name. Geirröd, who has been sitting with his half-drawn sword across his knees, when he finds that it is Odin whom he has set between the fires, hurries forward to release him. But as his sword falls point upward he stumbles forward, it runs into him, and he is killed. Then Odin vanishes, and Agnar is king in his father's stead.

Elder Edda: Myths of Gods.

In "Vafthrudhnismál," the song of Vafthrudhnir, Odin visits the hall of Vafthrudhnir, the wisest of the giants, to try his wisdom and learn what he knows; from each to each a strophe of question is followed by a strophe of answer on the knowledge of the gods.

In "Hávamál," the sayings of the High, there are set in strophic form more than a hundred sayings meant to embody the best wisdom of the poet's time.—Happy is he who wins praise and good will: our best wealth lies in the breast of another.—Let the chief's son be in the battle silent, prudent, brave, let every man show himself cheerful and good-tempered to the day of death.—The worthless man seeks life everlasting when he flies the fight; he has not peace in his old age although spared by the spear.—Even the herds know folding time and leave the grass; the fool only cannot learn the measure of his belly.—The unwise man watches the night through, careful of many things; when morning comes he is only tired, and his care stands where it was.—

It is a long way round to a false friend, though he live in the main road; it is not a step to a true friend, however far away his home may be.—Give good words to the true friend and the false, but to the true give gift for gift, and to the false give lie for lie.—That is a touch of the lower ethics of the past that slightly colour the good counsels of the "Hávamál." We soon rise again.—I was once young and walked alone, but I felt rich when I had found another; the joy of man is man.—The thornbush stands in the village without leaf or bark; so is it with the man useful to nobody. Why should he live any longer?—Trust one but not another; what three know, all know.—In some places I came too early, in others too late; the beer was drunk, or was too new; the unwelcome always come at a wrong time.—No one is all unhappy, though he suffer; he has a good son, or a good friend, or wealth, or he has done something nobly.—Flocks die, friends die, and at last the man himself, but the fame he has well earned dies never.—Praise the day in its evening, the woman when dead, the sword after trial, the bride when she's wed, the ice ere it's broken, the ale when we've drunk.—Such counsels are in the "Hávamál," with inweavings of reference to Odin and the giants.

"Rigsmál" tells how Heimdall came to a house by the seashore and, calling himself Rigr, entered by the open door to an old couple, Ai and Edda, who sat by the fire poorly clothed. Heimdall sat between them, supped with them; slept also between them in their bed, and there were born of them the servile race. He entered another house of a hard-working couple, Asi and Amma, and thence came the race of the peasants. He entered another house of a nobler pair, and thence came the race of the earls.

"Thrymskvidha," the tale of Thrym, which may serve as a last illustration of the character of these old songs of the gods of the Northmen, tells how Thor woke one morning and found his hammer gone. He shook his beard and

struck his head, and said, "Hear now, Loki! Who on earth or in heaven would have supposed it! I have been robbed of my hammer!" They went to the house of Freyja, and Thor said, "Freyja, lend me your feather dress that I may see whether I can find my Mjölnir." "You should have it," said Freyja, "even if it were made of gold." Loki went down in the feathers to the land of the Eotens, where he saw Thrym, chief of the stupid giants,* who sat upon a hill, putting gold collars on the dogs and combing the manes of the horses. "How are the gods?" asked Thrym; "and what brings you all alone to Eotenham?" "It is not well with the gods," said Loki. "Have you hidden the Thunderer's hammer?" "I have hidden the Thunderer's hammer eight baiting stages deep under the earth," said Thrym, "and no one shall get it again unless he bring me Freyja for a bride." Loki flew back, and Thor met him. "Have you done your work?" asked Thor. "I have done my work," said Loki. "Thrym, lord of the stupid giants, has your hammer, and nobody shall get it again unless he take him Freyja for a bride." They both went to Freyja, and Thor said, "Put on, Freyja, your bridal linen; we two must travel to Eotenham." Freyja was wild, and stormed till she shook the whole hall of the gods. "You must think me mad for a man if I am to go with you to Eotenham." The gods and goddesses gathered about, to think how they could get the Thunderer his hammer. Then said Heimdall, the brightest of the gods, "Let us put the bridal clothes on Thor, give him keys to clink, and women's clothes about his knees, precious stones on his breast, and a great veil over his head." Then said the strong Thor,

* Thurs was a name for a giant that carried with it the sense of massive stupidity; jötunn (First-English eoten) was the name for a giant representing the Titanic forces of the world. Vafthrudhnir was a jötunn. Thrym is a Þurs. Poetry was called mead of the eotens, jötna mjöðr.

"The gods would laugh at me for a woman if I did that." Then said Loki, "Silence, Thor, do not talk in that way. The giants will be in Asgard if we do not get your hammer back." So they dressed Thor in the bridal garments, put a brilliant necklace round his neck, and he clinked keys and put women's clothes over his knees; his breast glittered with precious stones, and a great veil covered his head. Then said Loki, "Now I must be your maid, and so we two go to Eotenham." Rocks split, fire flew as they travelled down to Eotenham. Thrym said, "Up, giants, strew the bridal hall. My cows come home to me with golden horns, treasure is plenty, there was only wanting Freyja for a wife." Guests came, the giants drank much ale. Thor ate an ox and eight salmon, and all the sweets provided for the women. Said Thrym, prince of the stupid giants, "Who ever saw women swallow so greedily? I never saw brides swallow so greedily, nor a maid drink so much mead." There sat the bride's maid ready with answer: "Freyja has not eaten for eight days, so strong was her desire to Eotenham." In search of a kiss the giant raised the veil, but recoiled in terror the whole length of the hall. "How terribly the eyes of Freyja blaze! Her glance seems to burn." There sat the bride's maid, ready with answer: "Freyja has not slept for eight nights, so strong was her desire to Eotenham." Then came the sad sister of Thrym for a gift. "Give me the red ring from your finger before you seek my love." Then called Thrym aloud, "Bring me the hammer to hallow the bride. Lay Mjölnir in the maiden's bosom, and give us to each other worthily." Then the Thunderer's heart laughed within him, as he felt the hard heart of the hammer. He struck Thrym first and then bruised all the giant race. He struck also the old sister of the eoten who had ventured to beg a bridal gift. She had hammerings for rings. And so the son of Odin got his hammer back.

In all this play of Northern fancy that made sport of

gods and men we see the tendency to a dramatic utterance. In the Eddas and in the heroic sagas dialogue abounds, and where there is not dialogue there is often narrative of one who speaks in character, as of the spae-woman in the "Völuspa." It was the literature of men of action, set in a region where no fruits dropped ripe into their laps, where they must do or die; where earth gave them rocks to climb and showed how the torrent dashed irresistible from hill to dale, where the sea gave them Atlantic storms, the sky was rich in wonders unknown to the south, where the long frosts shut families together, and the long nights set them story-telling to beguile the time. The fancy of the Northmen had a liveliness like that of the old Greeks, though there were no smooth slopes to its Parnassus.

The myths of heroes in the Edda include the "Völundarkvidha," the tale of Völund (Wayland) the smith. He was the third of three brothers who found by the Wolf lake in the Wolf valley three white maidens spinning flax, and married them, and lived with them for seven years. But the maidens were Valkyriur, and at the end of the seven years they flew away in search of slaughter. Völund's brothers wandered away in search of their wives. Völund awaited the return of his at the Wolf's lake, where he busied himself in the smithy with his wonderful work upon steel and gold and jewels. Nidudr was a king in Sweden who had two sons and a daughter, Bödwild. Nidudr sent armed men who broke into Völund's hall, under the moonlight, saw his seven hundred gold rings hanging on a line, took one, the ring of the Valkyri, and withdrew to ambush. Völund came in weary, counted his rings, found the ring of his bride, Allwhite, gone, and thought that she had come back to him. But when he slept he was seized by the men sent for him, hamstrung and set upon Säwarstadr, a holm by the sea-coast, to work for Nidudr. Nidudr gave to Bödwild his daughter Völund's

Elder Edda: Myths of Heroes.

ring, and took to himself Völund's sword. But Völund had his revenge. The boys of Nidudr, tempted to come alone and see Völund's chest of treasures, had their heads cut off and their skulls worked into ornaments, with jewels in the place of eyes, and sent as a present to their father. The daughter Bödwild, when her ring was broken, brought it to Völund to mend, and her also he brought to ruin.

Three songs of the Elder Edda tell the tale of Helgis; one is of Helgi, the son of Hiörvard; two are of Helgi, slayer of Hunding. These Edda songs are often introduced or interspersed with prose narrative, which, like the narrative of all the prose tales of the Northmen, is in the form of story-telling, not of story-writing. There is no toying with words in the prose tales, the action never flags. Persons of the story are introduced in a brief, business-like way, and when one of them is done with he is often dismissed simply by telling the listeners that "Now [N. or M.] goes out of the story." The tales of Helgi, slayer of Hunding, begin a series of tales of the Völsungs which are the earliest forms that have reached us of old legends gathered afterwards into the expanded circle of the "Nibelungenlied."

Prose Edda.

The plan of the Younger, or Prose Edda, is that a wise King Gylfi went in the shape of an old man to Asgard, to know more about the gods. But the gods knew of his coming. When he reached Asgard he saw a mighty hall roofed with gold shields. A man at the door, who was throwing seven small swords in the air and catching them, asked Gylfi his name, and he said he was Gángler, come from afar and needing a night's lodging. The door shut behind Gylfi as he was led in, through many rooms in which men were playing, drinking, and fighting, to where there were three high seats on which sat three kings, Hár, Jafnhár, and Thriði. With these he entered into question, and drew out of them in question and triple answer the whole mythical scheme of the universe, with frequent

quotation from the "Völuspa." When he had learnt all, there was a great din about Gylfi, and as he looked round he saw no hall, no Asgard, only a smooth valley from which he travelled back to his own kingdom.

The oldest of the Norwegian professed poets, or skalds, Starkod and Bragi the old, live only as traditional names. But in the days of Harold Hárfagr, at the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century, the names of skalds became historical. In Norway there were Thjoddolf and Thorbjörn Hornklofi and Eyvind, who was called Skaldârspillar, either to his credit because he excelled the other skalds, or to his discredit because he stole from them. The chief skalds of Iceland at that time were Egil Skallagrimsson, Kormak and Gunlaug Ormstunga, Gunlaug of the Serpent's Tongue, the hero also of a saga. He was a handsome youth but for his nose, and he loved Helga, granddaughter of Egil, who fought with Athelstane at Brunanburh. He won from her father, Thorstein, the promise of Helga if he returned in three years from his travels. He travelled to the court of King Ethelred, composed an heroic song in his honour, and received from him a costly mantle. He slew in London a northern ruffian who attacked him. He visited Siggtrygg Silkbeard, King in Dublin, and also Sigurd, Earl of the Orkneys. He visited King Olaf at Upsala, where the skald Hrafn, another Icelander, testified that Gunlaug was of noble strain. But the two skalds became rivals. Hrafn went to Iceland and won promise of Helga if Gunlaug did not return after some months of grace, his three years having lapsed. Gunlaug heard of the danger and hurried, but was a day too late. Conflicts followed, and the last holmgangr, or battle on an island, was between Gunlaug and Hrafn. It was a drawn battle, for at the first blow Hrafn's sword broke, and the blade in flying from his hand grazed Gunlaug's cheek. At last they fought on a meadow

Skalds.

in Sweden. Gunlaug cut off one of Hrafn's feet, and refused to fight more with a disabled man. Hrafn asked that as a last gift to a dying man Gunlaug would bring him water in his helmet. Gunlaug did so, and when he came near, Hrafn struck him on his undefended head. The battle was renewed. Hrafn was killed. Gunlaug died after three days. Helga was married to Thorkell, of Lavadale, a brave man who also was a skald, and they had children. But her mind was still on Gunlaug. She would sit gazing silently on the mantle that King Ethelwold had given him, and that he had given her. One day when many lay ill in her household, and she was ill but had not taken to her bed, she sat with her head on the good Thorkell's knee, and asked that Gunlaug's gift might be brought to her. Then she raised herself, and spread it out, and gazed on it, and sank back in her husband's arms and died.

Sagas.

The best time of this northern story-telling was in the first half of the thirteenth century. At the close of that century it fell into decay. Its stronghold was in Iceland, where the west part of the island yielded most. There the Egils saga dealt with events of the years from 860 to 1000, and had the love-tale of the Gunlaug saga for continuation. The western region of Iceland yielded also the Eyrbyggja saga, based on events of the years 880 to 1030; the Laxdæla saga, on events of 886–1030; and others based on events of later date. The southern region yielded events of the years 960 to 1016, on which the Njál saga was founded. Among sagas of the north of Iceland are the Kormaks saga, on events of the years 930 to 984; the Grettirs saga, on events of 872 to 1033; and the Viga Glums saga, on events of 920 to 1000. The east yielded Hrafnkel Freysgodis saga, on events of the year 950; and Vapnfirdinga, on events of 970 to 990. The shaping of each tale, as it comes down

to us, was much later than the events that grew into traditions out of which the tale was made. Sæmund Sigfusson, to whom the collection of the poems of the Elder Edda was ascribed, and after whom it is known also as Sæmund's Edda, was alive, and was but a boy, at the time of the battle of Hastings.

The Northmen who warred against Alfred and his aftercomers represented only that part of an advancing tide of life which happened to spread over England. In the eighth and ninth centuries such a tide of life came in over Europe from east, north, and south; and even the west was not spared, although on that side lay the broad wilderness of the Atlantic. For the Northmen had possession of the sea. From the east there poured in the Magyars, who do not here concern us; from the north the Scandinavians; and from the south, the Arabs.

Movements and change among the nations.

Fifty years after the death of Mahomet, which happened in 632, the Arabian was known from the Indus to the Guadalquivir as a ruling race of men restless and irresistible in their quick-witted energy and in the fierceness of religious zeal. Proud to dwell, as one of their poets said, beneath the shadow of their lances and cook their food upon the ashes of the conquered towns, by the year 715 the Arabs had overrun Spain and crossed the Pyrenees. The Gauls, too, were assailed in Provence. Why should not the Mediterranean be a Moslem lake? These Arabs, Moors, or Saracens,* not only by invasion, but by a continued immigration, found their way in great numbers to Provence and Aquitaine. Their blood stirs yet in the Provençal, influencing both aspect and character of the people, while traces of their former occupation cleave

The Arabs abroad.

* Arabic Sharkyen, the Eastern people, from Sharq, the East; Latin, Saraceni, Saracens.

yet to the soil in such local names as Puy-Maure and Mont Maure, near Gap; the Col de Maure, near Château Dauphin; the Forêt des Maures, on the Frejus coast. When the Mahometans had been expelled from Gaul and Italy, the Algerine galleys still clung to the coasts. We shall hereafter find Arab and Provençal influencing the expression of the English mind.

The Scandinavians abroad. Norsemen.

Heat of fanatical zeal, sustained by new experience of luxury and wealth that a keen wit and lively fancy made doubly enjoyable, scattered the Saracens as horsemen from their deserts and as seamen from their coasts. Necessity and a cool natural energy made enterprising sailors of men on the Scandinavian shores. The Swedish Scandinavians, facing inland seas with unattractive shores beyond their own, have been distinguished in history more for their prowess by land than as great shipmen. But the Norwegians, with an interior scarcely habitable, lived by the rivers and great fiords that opened on the billowy Atlantic. Their climate made them vigorous and active; food was to be had from land and sea only through labour and much wholesome buffet with the elements. There was more fish in the sea than fruit on land, and from the first the Norsemen must in their own home have learnt to be fearless sailors in skiffs built for weathering the roughest water.

Danes.

Its continuity broken only by the irruption of the Atlantic into the Baltic—which was a perfectly enclosed sea in the days when the waste of eaten shellfish was heaped by man near the primæval villages on the east coast of Denmark—the west coast of the Danes is but the rest of the Norwegian sea-border. Here, however, there is no rugged mountain shore opposed to the encroachment of the tides. All is flat land, at which a glance on the map of Europe shows how constantly, from the Liim Fiord southward over Denmark and old Friesland even to the

Scheldt, how hungrily the waters have been biting. The north and east Frisian islands, and the chain of islands fronting Zuyder Zee, lie on the sea's lips as crumbs of the long feast. Liim Fiord, Nissum Fiord, Stading Fiord, Ringkjöbing Fiord, the great ragged break behind the Frisian islands, Helgoland Bay, Jahde Bay, and the broad shoal-beset estuary of the Weser, Lower Zee, and Zuyder Zee, set forth the outlines of so many bites. The Danes, compelled also by nature to be active sailors, were not born to remain dependent on sea, forest, and marsh, when the east coast of richer Britain lay within easy sail; and, by sailing into the English Channel and ascending the Seine, wealth that seemed to them fabulous could, after the death of Charlemagne, be drawn out of France. Danes, therefore, and Norsemen were alike ready to seek prosperity across the water. On Easter Eve, 845, four years before the birth of our King Alfred, Regner Lodbrok and the Danes entered Paris, and among their plunder took for excellent ships' timber the larchen beams of the church of St. Germain-des-Près. How England was overrun in Alfred's childhood and youth we have seen. In 876, when our Alfred, twenty-seven years old, had been for five years an unlucky king; when Healfdene was in the north of England, Guthrum in the south, endeavouring to squeeze even the Cymry; Rolf (Hrôlf)—Latinised Rollo, Gallicized Rou—an adventurer, who had been with the rest in England also, after plundering the Scheldt country entered the Seine. He and his brother Gorm had quarrelled with their overking at home; Gorm had been killed, and Rolf took ship as a vikingr* for the

The Northmen in France. Rollo.

* A viking was an expedition over sea; a vikingr the man who went upon the expedition. It was so called, perhaps, from the vik or bay out of which ships sailed, and into which they crept. In the old northern life a young man had not won his place in society until he had been upon a viking, shown his courage, and brought booty home.

English harvest ground. Thence he had gone to the Belgians, and he had attacked Walcheren before he found his way up the Seine and met with no effective check. On the 17th of September, 876, he is said to have been invited by Bishop Franco to take peaceful occupation of Rouen, with its islands and surrounding country. Tradition says that Rolf then anchored his ship at the foot of the rock by the island church of St. Martin. Franco was not Bishop of Rouen till a later date. But it is now too late to amend the records. Rolf's men, it is said, took possession of the deserted place; the land was divided among them in the usual way, by rope (or, as they call the division here in Sussex, rape); and Rou received also a heavy Danegeld. In 882—two or three years after King Alfred had quieted Guthrum and secured a period of comparative rest for the English—the Danes in France attacked Soissons, whence Archbishop Incmar, the chronicler, fled with the bones of St. Rémi, to die soon afterwards. The English had made their stand in the spirit of their Frisian kindred, in whose Doombook it was ordered that each man must guard the dykes "which encircled the land like a golden ring; and each Frison was to defend his dear fatherland against the sea with the spade, and with the fork, and with the hod; and against the southern Saxon and the Northmen, against the tall helmet and the red shield, and the unrighteous might, with the point of the lance and the edge of the sword and the brown coat of mail. And thus shall we Frisons defend our land within and without, if they will help us, God and St. Peter."*

In July, 885—when King Alfred, who had beaten the Danes from Rochester the year before, was holding his own

* Quoted in Sir Francis Palgrave's "History of Normandy and England" (London, 1851–7), to which work I am indebted for some of the information given in the text.

in England, and endeavouring to infuse again through his country the health that comes of sound knowledge—Sigurd went up the Seine again; Rou re-occupied Rouen; and the Northmen invested Paris with that siege, one of the most famous events of the ninth century, which is described in Abbo of St. Germain's "De Bellis Parisiacæ Urbis." It is the same siege that was afterwards transformed in the lays of the trouvères, who for Eudes, the great Count of Paris, put the Charlemagne of fable, and made the Northmen Saracens. It is this memorable siege, therefore, that afterwards reappeared under disguise in the "Orlando Furioso." The siege was partly raised by subsidy, and cession to Sigfried (Ariosto's Agramante) of revolted Burgundy. In 889 and 890 Paris again suffered, and in the latter year the Northmen harried the borders of Brittany. There had been for the last seventy years, in the Cotentin, desolation of their causing. Rolf took Bayeux, and when the "terra Normanorum" afterwards became Normandy, it was from this part of it that the language of the Northmen disappeared most slowly. Here, indeed, had been the strength of the old "Littus Saxonicum" on the Gallic side of the Channel. There was a Saxon language spoken here when Rollo came.

The French called the language of the Northmen English, and the only scrap that remains of the speech of Rollo might well pass for English with them. When required to kiss the king's foot or knee for the territory at last formally granted him, he is said to have answered roughly, "Ne si by Got!" and then, according to the well-known tradition, one of his comrades, who performed the ceremony by proxy, hoisted the sacred toe so as to throw his majesty upon his back. The Northmen troubled themselves little about purity of race. Norseman, Jute, Angle, Frisian, any bold, needy seaman who would strengthen the attack on the rich fighting ground,

Foundation of Normandy.

was welcome among Rolf's companions in arms. They conquered, squatted, and settled on the region they had made a wilderness, about the course of the Seine below Paris, where it flows through modern Normandy. They made verbal agreements, but wrote nothing as treaty or record, till their first historian Dudon, Dean of St. Quentin —the only man who asserts that Rolf commanded at the siege of Paris—took his pen in hand. In 911—ten years after King Alfred's death—the conference was held at St. Clair-sur-Epte, where Rolf was urged to make an end of war by marrying the king's daughter Giselle, and taking with her Rouen and the surrounding lands, already long since conceded to him. But he claimed all the land from where he stood on the banks of the Epte to the sea, and so got the district since known as Haute Normandie, including the part of the Vexin Normande between the Andelle and Epte, in struggle over which William the Conqueror received his death-wound. Next year Rolf was baptised Robert at Rouen, and the land secured was roped out among his followers. These took to themselves wives among the half-Celtic women of the country, left their children to be taught by their French mothers, and, accommodating themselves in all things with a rough cosmopolitan frankness to their new position, forgot their original language, troubled themselves not at all about their ancestry, and became vigorous Frenchmen. They do not appear to have retained a single Northern saga; not a rune has been found inscribed upon memorial stone in all Normandy. Two centuries after their settlement the Normans in France did not even know whence they had come. Benoit de St. Maure begins his Norman chronicle by confounding Denmark with Dacia, and placing it between ice-covered lands at the mouth of the Danube;* while as for Rolf's father, he was remem-

* This is observed by Dr. Lappenberg in his "History of England under the Norman Kings," a work translated, with considerable

bered only as "Senex quidam in partibus Daciæ"—some old Dacian.

But evidences of the northern origin of the people attached themselves to the soil in the names of places. On the land of which they entered into possession, places with names ending in dal or dalle and t(h)al abound; there are fifty or more in the Bessin. The ending in -by—which in other northern forms is -boe, -böjgd, or bygd—appears under disguise in Elbeuf, Belbeuf, Marbeuf, Bourguebuf, Carquebuf, and Tournebue. The becks and bachs reappear—fair, birch-fringed, cold, turbid, or deep in the hollow—as Beaubec, Briquebec, Caldebec, Foulbec, Houlbec. The yard or garth, for fish or for apples, reappear in Fisigard and Auppegard, and Epegard. We have the northern toft in Yvetot, Raffetot, Garnetot, Criquetot, Houdetot, Sassetot. Near Godarville, in the department of the Lower Seine, the name of almost every village ends in tot. The towns or villages with names ending in eu and eur along the northern coast of France reproduce the old Norsk ey, Danish ö for an island, and Norsk aur, eyri, Danish ör, öre, for a shore. The ending in -fleur is, as the earlier names of places with those endings show, a changed form of the Norwegian fljôt, English fleet, a river. Thus, Harfleur used to be written Herosfluet. The Scandinavian næs, or ness, remains attached as distinctly to Blancnez, Grisnez, Nez de Tancarville, &c., as to Dungeness and Sheerness. While of those Norman names of places ending, like the Tancarville just mentioned, in ville, it is noticeable that they all attach

additions and corrections, by Benjamin Thorpe (Oxford, 1857), which together with the two preceding volumes of Dr. Lappenberg's "Anglo-Saxon History," also translated by Thorpe, supplies a valuable book on our early history to English students. But in later years our literature has been enriched by the masterpiece of Prof. E. A. Freeman, on the "History of the Norman Conquest," in five volumes, published during the ten years ending in 1876.

that ending, as the French sign of possession in the land, to a distinctly northern name. As in England, Asker, Ketil, and Clapa gave their names to Askarby, Kettleby, and Clapham, so in Norman France we find the ground once held by a Tancred, Gormund, Torf and Thorolf, Haco, Thurstan, in Tancarville, Gremonville, Tourville, Tonfreville, Haqueville, Toustainville.*

Rolf or Rollo died, an old man, in or about the year 931, thirty years after the death of King Alfred. Rolf was Count of Rouen or of the Normans. It is not until after the conquest of England that we find his heirs designated as chiefs of a country named, after the dominant race in it, Normandy. Rolf's son, William Longsword, was adding to his domain a part of the Breton coast, and the Normandy of the Conquest, that was to bring new life to our literature, was beginning to take shape at the time when Ethelwold and Dunstan were endeavouring to train the intellect of England under an unwonted strictness of monastic discipline.

Meanwhile in Denmark Gorm, and in Norway Harold Hárfagr, had founded kingdoms, and were now maintaining fleets. The Northmen who had secured homes in France and England desired no visits of plunder from their brethren. The old rough and natural viking life shrank, in its original home, into the exceptional form of Palnatoki's ideal viking commonwealth in

Formation of the Scandinavian kingdoms.

* I cite these sufficient illustrations from Thorpe's edition of Lappenberg, and from a book on which I draw also for some of the facts contained in the next few paragraphs, "An Account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland, and Ireland, by J. J. A. Worsaae" (London, 1852); other sources of information on the subject are Depping's "Les Noms topographiques d'Origine étrangère en Normandie," De la Rue's "Histoire de la Ville de Caen," and Auguste le Prevost's "Dictionnaire des anciens Noms de Lieu du Département de l'Eure."

Jomsburg; though in places like the Orkneys and the viking states of Ireland, busy plunderers still found homes and harbours for their ships. Iceland, as we have seen,* had been discovered by the Norsemen just before the time when Harold Hárfagr, by crushing all the petty kings into submission, made himself paramount in Norway. Many men of mark, who had resisted while they could, disdained to be subdued; and therefore, in the year 870, noble bands of Norse emigrants proceeded with their thralls, their cattle, and their goods to a new home in Iceland. Here their descendants, taught to cherish the old sagas of their fathers' home, dwelt in the dreary fjords and vales; a century afterwards discovered Greenland, whence early voyages were made to the New World; and in the year 1000, at their annual assembly or Althing, adopted Christianity as the national religion, with the reservation that they might continue to eat horseflesh and expose their children. Nearly at the same time the Norwegian king Olave, who was numbered among saints for his propagandist zeal, landing at the Orkneys, with soldiers and priests, compelled their Norse king Sigurd to be unwillingly baptised. Within the next two generations, also, the Northmen who held in Ireland Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, and Cork, adopted the form of religion by which they were then on every side surrounded.

England, with the unmixed elements of future power yet turbid and effervescent, had been made to feel the settled strength of the Danes. Landing in Essex in 991, they had defeated Byrhtnoth, and obtained, by advice of Archbishop Sidric, the first Danegeld, "an infamous precedent," says William of Malmesbury, "and quite unworthy the character of men, by money to redeem liberty, which no violence can ever

Danish conquest of England.

* "E. W." I. 269, 270.

extirpate from a noble mind." Then followed what is called by the Saxon Chronicle "a heavy time." There is evident confusion in the record between stray piracies of vikings from the Irish coast, and invasion and conquest by the Danes who had passed out of the viking stage of their national life. We have recalled in the preceding chapter* events leading to the establishment in England of the power of Canute. The life of Canute, the Great, called also the Rich, and King of Denmark, Norway, and England, who died in 1035, represents the advance of Danish civilisation. In England he was not only a benefactor of the Church, but under his rule the fusion between Saxon and Danish England became, not without much brisk effervescence at the outset, more complete. The rule of the Danes lasted until the death of Hardicanute in 1042, and it was undisturbed when Earl Godwin, as champion of the Saxons, made the weak, monkish son of Ethelred, Edward—afterwards called Edward the Confessor—King of England.

Saxon, Dane, and Norman.

Godwin and the other great chiefs who then had sway in England bore in their Danish title of jarl, earl, instead of the Saxon ealdorman, a mark of the direct strength of Scandinavian influence; and Edward, the son of Ethelred by Rolf's great-granddaughter, who had been trained as well as sheltered at the Norman court, was, in all but spirit, more than half a Norman. The mildness of his weak temper retained the fusion between English and Danes; but he came, speaking the language of the Normans, and his favourites at court were Norman priests and chiefs, who were to be addressed in their own language, and who did not adopt even the English dress. Meanwhile Earl Godwin, the representative of Anglo-Saxon England—accused as he has been of foul crimes by the Norman chroniclers, and represented as

* "E. W." II. 327—329.

miraculously choked to death by judgment of God—seems to have been an honest patriot, who had made Edward king, had married him to his own kindly and gentle daughter Editha, and was securing for him the support of Saxon England.

The anonymous Life of Edward the Confessor.

An unknown Anglo-Saxon writer, who mingles Latin verse with Latin prose in a "Life of the King Edward who lies at Westminster," dedicated to his patroness, Edward's surviving wife, his lively and clear account of those events of Edward's reign which he desired to tell. He knew the men whose acts and persons he describes; he had suffered poverty which Editha relieved; had suffered from enmity, perhaps of Norman courtiers; knew intimately the queen's brothers Harold and Tostig. He wrote during the lifetime of the queen, who died in 1074, and he alludes to the battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066; but he does not mention the death of Harold, or the Norman William. What he thought of the Conquest it would not then have been well for him to write, or during the next few generations for the copyist to reproduce. He said that he would be first to tell the events of Edward's reign.* His desire seems to have been, for the pleasure of Earl Godwin's daughter and King Edward's widow, with tenderness for Edward's memory, to put on record what a Saxon mind felt to be truth about Earl Godwin and the king. And there is probably no better key to the truth than this distinct contemporary narrative, of which every sentence is stamped with the mark of honest personal knowledge. The writer's good will for the king is, indeed, exceeded by his honour of the queen and

* He says, "Quisquis post temptet, sane secundus erit." His work (Harleian MS. 526) was first published in the series of Chronicles and Memorials issued under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, as one of three Lives of Edward the Confessor, edited by Henry Richard Luard, M.A. (London, 1858).

her father Godwin; but with great tact he avoids every word of disrespect to Edward's memory. A needy, lettered Saxon, attached first by the kindness of Editha to the house of the great Saxon leader, it happens that he gave his service to the persons by whom honour was really most deserved. Between Bede and William of Malmesbury we have no chronicler who puts so much true life into his record as this unknown client of Queen Edith's.

He sets forth at once the character, services, and honours of Godwin, and his marriage with Canute's sister-in-law, before he passes to the birth of Edward, his education in France, coronation, prosperity, and receiving of embassies. He describes the king as fairly tall, white-haired, full and pink-faced, with thin white hands, and long translucent fingers; pleasant in constant gravity and affable with eyes that sought the ground; fierce when angered, but not brawling in his wrath; gentle alike in granting and refusing favours. Verse now celebrates the gifts of welcome to the king, and compares Godwin's four children to the four rivers of Paradise.

We then learn how the king brought into England noble Frenchmen, on whom he bestowed English honours, whom he made his secret counsellors, and set over the people of his palace. Among those who came was a certain Ro(d)bert, Abbot of Jumièges, who had chief possession of the king's ear and greatly influenced his actions. The king made him Bishop of London, and his arrogance in governing the sovereign was breeding storms at court when the archbishopric of Canterbury became vacant. The monks of Canterbury elected for archbishop an able monk, named Ælric, who was dear to them and was of Earl Godwin's family, and through Godwin petitioned the king for confirmation of their choice. But the Normans had the king's ear, the petition was refused, and Robert thrust into the archbishopric.

Robert was an unscrupulous hater. He and Godwin were, in fact, the chiefs of the two interests at court—the Norman and the Saxon. Godwin, whose earldom included Kent and Sussex, possessed lands touching on lands of the church of Canterbury. Robert accused him to the weak monk-ridden king, first of encroachment on Church property. Godwin, says the narrator, from respect to the king and because it is innate in his people to avoid precipitate actions (as he writes afterwards also, in reference to Godwin's sons, nobody could suspect of rashness any of Godwin's race), Godwin, he says, behaved peaceably himself under this provocation, but could with difficulty prevent his followers from insulting the archbishop. Robert proceeded then to accuse Godwin of designs upon the throne, and of the murder of Edward's brother Alfred. The accusation, easily credited by the king, was urged formally; and although Stigand, then Bishop of Winchester, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, interceded, the king's peace was promised to Godwin only when he should restore alive to the king his dead brother.

Godwin then fled from his house on the Thames near London, and taking ship at Bosham went to Baldwin, Count of Flanders—to whose sister the earl's son Tostig had just been married—escaping those sent by the archbishop to kill him, if they found him upon English ground. The archbishop's next effort was to part the king from his wife Editha, who was Earl Godwin's daughter. She was sent, therefore, with royal attendance on the way, to be shut up in the monastery of Wilton, where she had been educated. Here the chronicler pauses, while he requests his Muse to sing with him of the sufferings borne by the innocent through slander. He then goes on to tell how Godwin was received with great honour by Count Baldwin, and how Godwin's sons, Harold and Leofric, went to Ireland, where they raised a force for the avenging of their father. In

England the Saxons regarded Godwin's exile as their ruin. Meanwhile Godwin for himself, and, in his behalf, the King of France and Count of Flanders, sought the renewal of good will with King Edward. But the Norman faction still prevailed, and the great Saxon earl therefore collected a fleet, and having crossed the sea, was joined by men of the east and south of England. His two sons also invaded England with the ships from Ireland. The king gathered a force to prevent the earl's entry into London, but the whole city went out to meet him and wish him success. Earl Godwin told the citizens that he would rather die than, while he lived, see the king suffer hurt or wrong; and when he came before the king, putting away his arms and kneeling at his feet, he besought, in the name of Christ, whose cross was on the crown the king wore, that he might clear himself of the crime charged against him and return in peace to England. The archbishop Robert and his men had fled from the earl's presence; and the king, having proceeded with him to his palace, after a little while, consenting to wise counsel, offered him the kiss of peace, and took him and his sons back into favour. Queen Editha was then brought back out of the Wilton monastery, and hereupon the chronicler's verse proceeds to compare Godwin's conduct to King Edward with that of David towards Saul. Two years afterwards Godwin died, mourned by the whole people, and was buried with great honour at Winchester.

His eldest son Harold succeeded to his earldom, trusted by the people, whom he excelled in vigour of mind and body as another Judas Maccabeus: tall, strong to endure fast and watching, a friend of his own race, and, like his father, patient and compassionate, though with a sword sharp against plunderers. Earl Siward of Northumberland died very soon after, and was buried in a church of St. Olave's, founded by himself. That is the Siward whose name

lives in Shakespeare's verse. Macduff, when need was sore, went to the English court—

> " to pray the holy king upon his aid
> To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward.

Earl Godwin's son and the queen's brother, Tostig, was Siward's successor. Tostig was forecasting, silent, prosperous, immutable; munificent in largess and, by his wife Fausta's counsel, chiefly liberal towards the Church. Gyrth, a younger son of Earl Godwin, received from King Edward a countship in Kent.

The narrative then tells how Harold, partly that he might observe on his way the strength of the French princes, went to Rome. Tostig, with his wife and younger brother Gyrth, followed by way of Saxony and the Upper Rhine. Incidents at Rome are then narrated, somewhat as if the chronicler had himself been there in the train of the brothers. After their return the quarrel between Harold and Tostig has to be told, and the first mention is veiled under a metrical comparison of it to the banquet of Thyestes. Then follow sketches of the character and habits of King Edward and his queen, with incidental description of the defeats of Griffith, King of Wales, and of Macbeth, King of Scotland (who murdered King Duncan in the year 1039), which the writer does not propose to relate in full. He tells at more length of King Edward's transformation of the poor little monastery of St. Peter at Westminster, placed by the river-side, in green, sunny, and fertile fields near the great city, into a costly abbey, because St. Peter was the king's own patron saint, and in that abbey he determined to be buried. As for Queen Editha, she restored her old monastery home of Wilton; and the chronicler inserts the verses he wrote on occasion of its consecration after a fire that had destroyed much of the town in the year 1065. Then followed a bloody revolt of nobles in Northumber-

land against Tostig's succession to the power of old Siward. Tostig accused his brother Harold of being privy to this, and great was the queen's distress at the strife of her brothers. Tostig, dismissed, took refuge with his brother-in-law, the ancient friend of the English, Baldwin, Count of Flanders. Having told how Baldwin was made Regent of France, the chronicler laments in verse the civil war between Harold and Tostig, and celebrates in the same verse their successes against the Cymry, whom the troubles of the Anglo-Saxon race had tempted to cross the Severn. But the Muse herself breaks in upon his plaint with comfortable words, bidding him write of the life and death of Edward; of the queen also who first gave him a helping hand; and let all that he writes be in their praise and honour; dedicating to her the fruit of his labour. The poet assents with a heavy heart. Earl Godwin and King Edward are dead. Harold and Tostig he knew and served well when they were with their sister, and now he is sad in his bereavement of so many and great lords:—

> "Pareo suadenti, nimium sed corde dolenti,
> Tot tantisque miser orphanus a dominis."

Here, I believe, the narrative, closed with its dedicatory lines, originally ended; true to life in every touch. Then follows an account, interpersed with miracle and vision, of Edward's death, of his dying prophecy of ills to come on England, and of his burial also, with a reference to miracles worked at his tomb. But I suspect all this to have been appended by a later—although not much later—hand than that which wrote within a year or two after the Conquest a fresh, natural sketch of what he had seen and felt at court, as friend and servant of Earl Godwin's daughter, in the days of that Edward who was first called the Confessor in the Papal bull for his canonisation

issued by Alexander III. about a hundred years after his death.

How the maintenance of the Anglo-Saxon crown in a day of great peril was entrusted to Harold, who vigorously began a hopeful reign; how the bastard Duke William of Normandy put in his claim, declaring that King Edward had nominated him, that Harold, when once half-prisoner in Normandy, had sworn fidelity to him, and that his grandfather had been Emma's brother; how Tostin, or Tostig, warring against Harold, allied himself to the King of Norway, Harold Hardrade, who fell on the day of his defeat at the great battle of Stamford Bridge; how William, with a banner blessed by the Pope, landed at Pevensey on Michaelmas Day, in the year 1066, and, falling forward as he stepped ashore, cried, "By God's splendour! I have seized England with my two hands!" while a Norman, offering him thatch pulled from the nearest hut, said, "Sire, receive the seizin; the country is yours!"—of all this we read the detail in the chronicle of William of Malmesbury, and in the Roman de Rou. And although we read the story of the Conquest in the Norman version, yet the fight for the kingdom at Senlac—called Hastings by William—where Taillefer, the minstrel knight, struck the first blow for Norman influence, was one in which a Saxon poet might without shame have sung how Harold and the sons of Godwin died.

Literary influences of the Conquest.

The son who leaves a father with the dead
  Returns to find within the father's home
Unburied memories of all he said
  And did in forecast of the time to come.

Through those who follow him the father lives
  Whose labour looked beyond his little day
Whose son still feeds the sacred fire, and gives
  His children hands to work and lips to pray.

So in our home, this England, still live on
Unburied memories of life in death ;
The Age we buried with Earl Godwin's son
Passes to us, through time, its living breath.

The forces of decay build life anew
For the next onward sweep to gain a height ;
The free life stirs; if it be free and true,
Graves are our footholds for the forward fight.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

CÆDMON'S PARAPHRASE.

1655.—"Cædmonis Monachi Paraphrasis Poetica Genosios ac præci puarum Sacræ paginæ Historiarum, abhinc annos MLXX.' Anglo-Saxonice conscripta, et nunc primum edita a FRANCISCO JUNIO F.F.—Amstelodami, apud Christophorum Gunradi, typis et sumptibus Editoris MDCLV." The first printed edition.

1752.—The remainder of this edition was issued by James Fletcher, a bookseller of Oxford, with addition of a page and a half of notes that had been added to his own copy by Junius. This reissue was associated with a design for an edition of what Junius had published as Cædmon's Paraphrase, with a Translation into Modern English by Edward Lye. It was a part of the same design to issue facsimile copies of the pictures in the original MS. Some of the plates engraved for this purpose, at the cost of Edward Rowe-Mores and Dr. Charles Lyttleton, were published as—

1754.—"Figuræ quædam antiquæ ex Cædmonis Monachi Paraphraseos in Genesin, exemplari pervetusto in Bibliotheca Bodleiana adservato delineatæ; ad Anglo-Saxonum mores ritus atque ædificia seculi præcipue decimi illustranda in lucem editæ. Anno Domini MDCCLIV."

1832.—"Cædmon's Metrical Paraphrase of Parts of the Holy Scriptures, in Anglo-Saxon; with an English Translation, Notes, and a Verbal Index." By Benjamin Thorpe, London: Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, and sold by Black, Young, and Young, of Tavistock Street, Covent Garden.

1833.—Separate issue by the Society of Antiquaries of facsimiles of all the drawings in the Cædmon MS. They had been first issued in vol. xxiv. of the "Archæologia," with eleven pages of Introduction by Sir Henry Ellis, and three by Sir Francis Palgrave.

1851-54.—"Cædmon's des Angelsachsen biblische Dichtungen. Herausgegeben von K. W. Bouterwek, 1. Theil. Elberfeld, 1851, Julius Bädeker." London: Dulau and Co.; D. Nutt.; Williams and Norgate. "2. Theil. Gütersloh, bei C. Bertelsmann, 1854."

1857.—Printed in Grein's "Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Poesie."

1883.—"Exodus and Daniel," being Vol. II. of the Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry edited by James A. Harrison and Robert Sharp. Boston, 1883. Second edition, 1885.

EXETER BOOK.

1705.—The Exeter Book was first mentioned publicly in Wanley's Catalogue, forming the second part of George Hickes's folio, "Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico-Criticus at Archæologicus," which had for a second Title—"ANTIQUÆ LITERATURÆ SEPTENTRIONALIS LIBRI DUO. Quorum primus GEORGII HICKESII S. T. P. Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesaurum Grammatico-Criticum et Archæologicum, Ejusdem de antiquæ Literaturæ Septentrionalis utilitate Dissertationem Epistolarem, et Andreæ Fountaine Equitis aurati Numismata Saxonica et Dano-Saxonica complectitur. Alter continet HUMFREDI WANLEII LIBRORUM VETT. SEPTENTRIONALIUM, qui in Angliæ Biblioth. extant, CATALOGUM historico-criticum; necnon multorum vett. codd. Septentrionalium alibi extantium notitium; cum totius operis sex Indicibus. Oxoniæ e Theatro Sheldoniano, An. Dom. MDCCV."

1812.—John Josias Conybeare published in Vol. XVII. of the Archæologia an Account of an Anglo-Saxon Manuscript preserved in the Cathedral Library at Exeter, with a Hymn of Thanksgiving extracted from the "Crist."

1826.—Other pieces in the Exeter Book were described with translation from them in "Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry. By John Josias Conybeare. Edited, together with Additional Notes, Introductory Notices, etc., by his brother, William Daniel Conybeare. London: Printed for Harding and Lepard, Pall Mall East, 1826."

1833.—"Widsith" was taken by J. M. Kemble from the Exeter Book, and added to his edition of Beowulf as "The Traveller's Song."

1842.—"Codex Exoniensis. A Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, from a Manuscript in the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter. With an English Translation, Notes, and Indexes. By

Benjamin Thorpe. London: Published for the Society of Antiquaries of London by William Pickering. 1842."

This volume, and Thorpe's edition of Cædmon in 1832, had arisen from a proposal published in 1830 by the Rev. N. F. S. Grundtvig, D.D., of Copenhagen, to publish a "Bibliotheca Anglo-Saxonica, containing the most valuable Anglo-Saxon MSS., illustrative of the Early Poetry and Literature of our Language." This proposal was not carried out. The best support it could have had was given to the establishment of a like enterprise under the direction of a Committee of the Society of Antiquaries, which was to issue Anglo-Saxon and Early Texts with Translations. The three works issued under this arrangement were Thorpe's Cædmon, in 1831; Thorpe's Exeter Book, in 1842; and Sir Frederick Madden's "Layamon," in 1847.

1857–58.—Grein's "Bibliothek" reprinted the poems in the Exeter Book from Thorpe's edition.

VERCELLI BOOK.

1824–36.—"Iter Italicum. Von Dr. Fr. Blume" (Berlin and Stettin, 1824–36), contains the first account of Blume's discovery of the book, during his stay in Vercelli, from October 27th to November 19th, 1822. Friedrich Blume was Professor of Jurisprudence at Göttingen.

1836.—Appendix B to Mr. Cooper's Report for 1836 (on Rymer's "Fœdera") published a transcript of the Vercelli Book, printed under the superintendence of Benjamin Thorpe, as part of its contents, which were:—

"Canones editi sub Eadgero Rege. Pœnitentialis Ecgberti Archiepiscopi Eboracensis liber quartus. Glossarium Latino-Anglo-Saxonicum e cod. Bruxell. . . . From the Anglo-Saxon Psalter in the Royal Library at Paris. *Vercelli Book.* Anglo-Saxon Gloss to Prudentius from a MS. at Boulogne. Anglo-Saxon and Old Saxon Glossary at Epinal, originally of the Abbey of Moyen Moutier. Anglo-Saxon Inscription in the Codex Aureus Evangeliorum at Stockholm."

1840.—"Andreas und Elene. Herausgegeben von Jakob Grimm. Kassel, 1840." Edited from the text printed in the Appendix to Mr. Cooper's Report.

1843.—"The Poetry of the Codex Vercellensis, with an English Translation by J. M. Kemble. Part I., The Legend of St. Andrew," 1843.

1856.—"Part II. Elene, and Minor Poems." 1856. Both Parts printed for the Ælfric Society.

1877.—"Cynewulf's Elene. Mit einem Glossar. Herausgegeben von Julius Zupitza." Berlin, 1877. New Edition, 1883. The text in this edition had been freshly collated with the original by Prof. P. Knoll, of Vienna.

JUDITH.

1698.—"Heptateuchus. Liber Job, et Evangelium Nicodemi; Anglo-Saxonice. Historiæ *Judith* fragmentum; Dano-Saxonice.—Edidit nunc primum ex MSS. codicibus Edwardus Thwaites e Collegio Reginæ.—Oxoniæ e Theatro Sheldoniano, An. Dom. MDCXCVIII. Typis Junianis."

This was the first printing of the poem of "Judith," which has been since included in eight or nine collections of pieces, and in a separate edition at Copenhagen.

1858.—"Judith. Fragment af ett forn engelsk Quæde. Med Svensk öfversættning och Glossarium af L. G. Nilsson. Kjöbenhavn. Thieles Bogtrykkerei, 1858."

WORKS OF KING ALFRED.

1568.—"Ἀρχαιονομία, sive de priscis Anglorum Legibus Libri, sermone Anglico, vetustate antiquissimo, aliquot abhinc seculis conscripti, atque nunc demum, magno iuris peritorum et amantium antiquitatis omnium commodo, e tenebris in lucem vocati. Gulielmo Lambardo interprete. Londini, ex officina Joannis Daii. An. 1568." This quarto contained the first printed edition of King Alfred's Laws.

The Preface to Gregory's "Cura Pastoralis" was first printed with Asser's Life of King Alfred, by Matthew Parker, in small folio:—

1574.—"Ælfredi regis res gestæ, a Johanne Assero scriptæ, a Matthæo Parker editæ, et literis Saxonicis, quamvis Latinæ, expressæ. Londini in ædibus Johannis Daii, 1574."

The first complete edition of the Anglo-Saxon text was

1871-72 "King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's 'Pastoral Care.' With an English Translation, the Latin Text, Notes, and

an Introduction. Edited by Henry Sweet, for the Early English Text Society."

1643.—"Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Gentis Anglorum Libri V. a venerabili Beda Presbytero scripti; tribus præcipue MSS. Latinis, a mendis haud paucis repurgati: Ab augustissimo veterum Anglo-Saxonum rege, Aluredo (sive Alfredo) examinati; ejusque paraphrasi Saxonica eleganter explicati; tribus nunc etiam MSS. Saxonicis collati. Una cum annotationibus et analectis e publicis veteris ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Homiliis, aliisque MSS. Saxonicis, hinc inde exerptis, nec antea Latine datis: Quibus in calce operis Saxonicam Chronologiam, seriem hujus imprimis Historiæ complectentem, nunquam antea in lucem editam, nunc quoque primo Latine versam contexuimus: opera hæc fere omnia Saxonica hactenus in archivis recondita, nunc demum in reipublicæ literariæ usum deprompta e bibliotheca publica Cantabrigiensi. (Ab Abrahamo Wheloc) Cantabrigiæ, excudebat Rogerus Daniel, celeberrimæ Academiæ typographus. MDCXLIII."

This folio contained the first printed edition of King Alfred's translation of Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," with a Translation into Latin. The next edition was, also in folio—

1722.—"Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ Gentis Anglorum libri quinque, auctore sancto et venerabili Bæda Presbytero Anglo-Saxone, una cum reliquis ejus operibus historicis in unam volumen collectis. Cura et studio Johannis Smith S. T. P. et Ecclesiæ Dunelmensis non ita pridem Canonici. Cantabrigiæ, typis academicis, MDCCXXII." This volume contains, after the Latin text, King Alfred's Translation.

1699.—Of the edition of King Alfred's Orosius, "Hormesta Pauli Orosii," planned by William Elstob, only the title page and two specimen leaves were printed. Next followed

1773.—"The Anglo-Saxon Version, from the Historian Orosius. By Ælfred the Great. Together with an English Translation from the Anglo-Saxon. Edited by Daines Barrington. London: Printed by W. Bowyer and J. Nichols. MDCCLXXIII."

This volume contained a map of Alfred's Europe, and Geographical Notes on the first chapter of the first book by J. Reinhold Forster.

1853.—R. Pauli's "Life of Alfred the Great," translated from the

German. To which is appended Alfred's Anglo-Saxon Version of Orosius, with a literal English Translation by B. Thorpe. In Bohn's Antiquarian Library, 1853. New Edition, 1878.

1859.—"King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon Version of the Compendious History of the World by Orosius." By Joseph Bosworth. Longman and Co., 1859.

1883.—"King Alfred's Orosius." Edited by Henry Sweet. Part I: Old English Text and Latin Original. London: Published by the Early English Text Society.

1589.—Of the voyages of Wulfstan and Ohthere a loose translation was contributed by Dr. John Caius, or by Lambarde, to Hakluyt's "Principal Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation," as "Voyages of Octher, made to the east parts beyond Norway, reported by himself unto Alfred, the famous King of England, about the year 890. The voyage of Octher out of his Country of Halgoland into the Sound of Denmarke, unto a part called Hetha, which seemeth to be Wismer or Rostoke."

"Wolstan's Navigation within the East Sea (within the Sound of Denmarke) from Hetha to Trussa, which is about Dantzic."

1659.—Somner's "Dictionarium Saxonico-Latino Anglicum" contained a part of Wulfstan's Voyage.

1678.—Sir John Spelman's Life of King Alfred includes the text of both voyages with a translation into Latin.

There have since been about two dozen separate reprints of these voyages, and of the Geography of Europe added to Orosius by King Alfred, either as separate studies, or as included in collections of extracts.

The first printed edition of King Alfred's translation of Boethius was in octavo—

1698.—"An. Manl. Sever. Boethi Consolationis Philosophiæ libri V. Anglo-Saxonice redditi ab Alfredo, inclyto Anglo-Saxonum rege. Ad apographum Junianum expressos edidit Christophorus Rawlinson, e Collegio Reginæ. Oxoniæ, e Theatro Sheldoniano MDCXCVIII. Sumtibus editoris, typis Junianis."

There was an edition by J. S. Cardale in 1829, and another for Bohn's Antiquarian Library in 1864, edited with a literal English translation by the Reverend Samuel Fox.

1858.—The whole works of King Alfred the Great. Jubilee Edition. With Preliminary Essays illustrative of the History, Arts, and Manners of the Ninth Century. Edited by J. A. Giles. This was resolved upon at a celebration of the thousandth year from Alfred's birth, held at Wantage on the 25th of October, 1849. With many illustrative papers it included translations by Dr. Giles of Alfred's Charters and Laws, and of his Will; Dr. Bosworth's translation of Orosius; his version of Bede, translated by E. Thomson; his Boëthius and his Preface to Gregory's "Care of the Soul," by the Reverend S. Fox.

SAXON CHRONICLE.

1643.—The Saxon Chronicle was first printed by Wheloc as an appendix to his edition of Bede. [See the fourth entry under King Alfred.]

The first distinct edition of it was in

1692.—"Chronicon Saxonicum, seu Annales rerum in Anglia præcipue gestarum, a Christo nato ad annum usque MCLIV deducti ac jam demum Latinitate donati. Cum Indice rerum Chronologico. Accedunt regulæ ad investigandas nominum locorum origines. Et nominum locorum ac virorum in Chronico memoratorum explicatio. Opere et studio Edmundi Gibson, A.B., e Collegio Reginæ. Oxoniæ, e Theatro Sheldoniano. MDCXCII."

GOSPELS.

The first edition of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels was in quarto, by John Fox, the Martyrologist, who wrote also the Dedication to Queen Elizabeth. No editor's name was on the title page:—

1571.—"The Gospels of the fower Evangelists, translated in the olde Saxons tyme out of Latin into the vulgare toung of the Saxons, newly collected out of auncient monuments of the sayd Saxons, and now published for testimonie of the same. At London. Printed by John Daye, dwelling over Aldersgate, 1571."

ÆLFRIC'S HOMILIES AND OTHER WORKS

were first collected by Benjamin Thorpe in

1844-46, as "The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church," printed in two volumes for the Ælfric Society.

The earliest edition of a single sermon was by Matthew Parker:—

1567.—"A Testimonie of Antiquitie, shewing the auncient fayth in the Church of England touching the Sacrament of the Body and Bloude of the Lord here publikely preached, and also receaued in the Saxon's tyme, above 600 years agoe.

"Ieremie 6: Goe into the streetes, and inquyre for the olde way: and if it be the good and ryht way, then goe therein, that ye maye find rest for your soules. But they say: We will not walke therein." This volume contains Ælfric's Sermon on the Paschal Lamb; Epistles to Wulfsine and Wulfstan; the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments in Anglo-Saxon, all with translations into modern English.

1881.—*Ælfric's Lives of Saints.* The first complete edition was by W. W. Skeat for the Early English Text Society.

1659.—*Ælfric's Grammar* was first printed in the second volume of Somner's Dictionary. The first distinct edition of it was in

1880.—"Sammlung Englischer Denkmäler in kritischen Ausgaben. Band I.: Ælfric's Grammatik und Glossar herausgegeben von J. Zupitza. 1 *abtheilung.* Text und Varianten. Berlin: Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung. 1880."

The second volume of this valuable series was

WULFSTAN'S HOMILIES.

1883.—"Wulfstan, herausgegeben von Arthur Napier. 1 *abtheilung.* Text und Varianten." Berlin: Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung. 1883."

THE FIRST ANGLO-SAXON POEM PRINTED IN ENGLAND

was an unimportant poem upon Durham, and the Relics there printed in

1652 in Roger Twisden's "Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptores X."

CORPUS POETICUM.

1857–58.—The two volumes of Grein's "Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie" were published at Göttingen (George H. Wigand) in 1857, 1858. They contained the whole body of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, and were followed in—

1861–64 by two volumes of Glossary issued in four parts, which completed the work.

1857–59.—In 1857 and 1859 Grein published also at Göttingen (Wigand), in two sections, "Dichtungen der Angelsachsen, stabreimend übersetzt"; translations of the most important of the poems in alliterative verse. Grein planned, also, and began to produce in

1872 a "Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa," producing in that year a first section containing "Ælfric on the Old and New Testament, the Pentateuch, Joshua, the Book of Judges, and Job."

Grein designed to carry on his work by writing a "History of Anglo-Saxon Grammar," and a Grammar arranged as he taught it in his lectures. After his death the Grammar appeared in

1880 as "Kurzgefasste angelsächsische Grammatik," von Prof. Dr. C. W. Grein. Kassel. George H. Wigand. 1880."

1881.—Grein's work as an editor has been carried on by Dr. Richard Paul Wülcker, Professor at Leipzig, who began in 1881 a new edition of the "Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie" (Cassel, G. H. Wigand), with additions and with special attention to the accuracy of the text. The poems from the Vercelli Book were all published in this edition after a visit to Vercelli for fresh collation of them with the original MS.

Dr. Wülcker (who now writes his name Wülker) stands now in Grein's place as a promoter of Ango-Saxon studies, and among other services we are indebted to him for an elaborate

BIBLIOGRAPHY,

so arranged, described, and discussed that it serves also as a History of Literature from the Bibliographical point of view. To this book, with admiration of its thoroughness, I refer all who wish for full information on the dates of books and papers, and the views expressed in them. It is

1885.—"Grundriss zur Geschichte der Angelsächsischen Litteratur. Mit einer übersicht der angelsächsischen Sprachwissenschaft. Von Dr. Richard Wülker, O. Professor an der universität Leipzig. Leipzig: Veit and Co. 1885."

When the author of this excellent book prepares a new German edition, I hope he will arrange also for its translation into English.

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LAST LEAVES.

DURING the issue of ENGLISH WRITERS it is proposed to occupy a few *Last Leaves* in each volume with unconventional notes upon matter contained in preceding volumes. Such notes will be for correction of errors, for record of later additions to the sum of knowledge upon any subject that has been already discussed, and for any form of useful communication between the writer of the book and his readers.

These leaves are dated "January, 1888," in a volume that was to have been published in the summer of 1887. It is not possible to forecast the way of life. If the next volume were promised for January, 1889, it might appear in the summer of 1888, as I hope it will. If the evening of life do not give long enough light for the completion of this book, it will be, at any rate, complete as far as it goes. The two volumes now published are provided with extra title pages for the use of any who may wish to bind them separately as a record of our Literature before the Conquest.

The next volume will cover the years of Early English Literature from the Conquest to Chaucer, and the fourth volume should end at the Invention of Printing. This will complete the reconstruction of that part of the work which was first published about twenty years ago.

To the continuation of the book, with such attendant

work for the diffusion of English Writings as forms a part of its design for making English Writers known more thoroughly by English Readers, the whole rest of my working life will then be given. In a certain way the body of our Literature forms a single image in my mind. My wish is to transfer that image to paper. After June, 1889, I shall have given up the oral teaching that has occupied for the last thirty years a large part of my time, and made every day happy with friendships that do not end at the grave.

Since the first volume of "English Writers" was published there has appeared a valuable work which gives the latest word upon Runic Inscriptions.

Die Runenschrift, von Ludv. F. A. Wimmer. Vom Verfasser umgearbeitete und vermehrte Ausgabe, mit 3 Tafeln und Abbildungen im Texte. Aus dem Dänischen übersetzt von Dr. F. Holthausen. Berlin. Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung, 1887.

This book had its origin in lectures given at the University of Copenhagen in the spring of 1873, which were printed in 1874. There followed close upon the printing of these lectures many discoveries of runic inscriptions, and new views as to the date of some of them. On the 25th of February, 1881, Dr. Wimmer communicated to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences the most important results at which he had arrived. The book now published is a German edition of the early work, embodying all results of the author's studies of the last ten years, furnished by himself to Dr. Holthausen. Thus the book, although translated from the Danish, has not in its present form been published in Denmark. It is dedicated to the memory of Rask, and to Westergaard, a follower of Rask; for the year of publication was the centenary of Rasmus Kristian Rask, who was born, of peasant parents, in the island of Fünen on the 22nd of November, 1887.

Dr. Wimmer's book, in its new and enlarged form, strengthens the evidence of an origin, at the end of the second or beginning of the third century, for the Germanic runes in the Latin alphabet, through influence of Rome upon outlying nations. That influence perhaps was modified in some respects, although not necessarily, by passing to the Germans through the Gauls of Upper Italy, who at first had based their alphabet on North Etruscan writing. The runes of the first period, the oldest, with the longer alphabet of twenty-four letters, Dr. Wimmer dates between the years 400 and 650 after Christ. The later runes, written with the shorter alphabet of sixteen letters, he places between the years 800 and 1,000; the interval between 650 and 800, which yields fewer remains, was a period of gradual transition from the oldest to the latest form of runic alphabet.

Dr. Wimmer sharply attacks Canon Isaac Taylor's "Greeks and Goths, a study of the Runes," which contains a theory of a Thracian-Greek origin of the runes, and which had the assent of Professor George Stephens, to whom also Dr. Wimmer is much opposed.

In this volume and in its predecessor I have differed greatly in opinion from some fellow-workers, for whose labours I seek always to show the respect I feel. I have tried, and shall always try, to record truly and fully opinions entitled to be heard, when I have not been able to accept them, and to keep all oppositions of opinion within friendly bounds. Wherever I have failed, or may fail, to keep those right bounds, blame should fall upon me only. I do not know why a student of life or language in the obscure times of which only we have thus far spoken should be so positive as he often is, that all the light is in himself, unless it be that with darkness around him it is himself alone that he can feel or see. One of the best Celtic scholars in

Europe published a collection of Irish Texts with a dictionary. A younger man, who was a good scholar too, attacked his predecessor through a hundred and forty pages. Another foremost Celtic scholar has been charged with inability to conjugate the verb "to be." So, in the last century, hundreds of men who could conjugate Greek verbs, and whose names are now forgotten by the world, sharply declared that Bentley was "no scholar." They meant to arraign his knowledge, but he failed only in temper. What is a scholar? It should be a man or woman who scorns delights and lives laborious days, to acquire by life-long labour knowledge of some matter of study for its own sake and its uses to the world; who is drawn by love of it into a sense of comradeship that welcomes all who lead or follow in the chosen path; who learns more and more clearly every year how little is the most we can achieve, whose hand, therefore, is swift to support a stumbling neighbour, never put out to force a trip into a fall; whose word is clear of bitterness, who has digested knowledge into wisdom, and who helps on the day to which Hooker looked forward, "when three words uttered with charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit."

Next follows a note of correction. What are called slips of the pen should usually be called slips of the mind. In the first volume of "English Writers," on pages 255—257, there was a sketch of the life and work of Ulfilas, with dates accurately given. In a new paragraph on page 257 the narrative passed on to an account of subsequent movements of the Goths, which caused MSS. of their Bible translations to be carried into Italy, where they were afterwards found. Some lingering vibration of thought then caused Ulfilas to make wrong appearances on page 257, seven lines from the bottom, and 258, four lines, and again ten lines, from the

top. This error appeared only in the first edition, it was corrected in the second, and as it immediately followed a dated record of the life of Ulfilas, every reader could correct it for himself without looking outside the pages of the volume. The tendency to slip of mind, however, began a little earlier, at the end of the description of the work of Ulfilas, on page 257, line fourteen from the bottom, where it is said that "of the Mœso-Gothic translation of the Old Testament there are only two scraps from the first and second book of Exodus." Here "Exodus" stood for "Esdras." Most likely this was one of the misprints over which the mind slips in that state of half attention "which sometimes hath its hour with every man." Perhaps it was not a misprint, for there are moments when fatigue or chance withdrawal of attention lets the mind slip into utterance of words that have no active thought behind them. But the best is little. When we try to be most useful we may plough the sand.

> "Nos tamen hoc agimus, tenuique in pulvere sulcos
> Ducimus, et litus sterili versamus aratro."

H. M.

January, 1888.

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ENGLISH WRITERS

Section I.

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WRITERS BEFORE THE CONQUEST

BY

HENRY MORLEY

LL.D. PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

In Two Volumes

VOL. I.

CASSELL & COMPANY LIMITED

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